BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY in the ABANDONED CITY

ROY ROCKWOOD

Frederick Arthur

from

C. P. Hutchins Xmas 193

THE ARROW PIERCED THE THROAT OF THE MONSTER

Bomba in the Abandoned City

BOMBA

THE JUNGLE BOY IN THE ABANDONED CITY

OR

A Treasure Ten Thousand Years Old

BY

ROY ROCKWOOD

AUTHOR OF "BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY," "THROUGH THE AIR TO THE NORTH POLE," "THE CITY BEYOND THE CLOUDS," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK
CUPPLES & LEON COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

BOOKS FOR BOYS

By ROY ROCKWOOD

THE BOMBA BOOKS

12mo. Cloth. Illustrated.

BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY
BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY AT THE MOVING MOUNTAIN
BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY AT THE GIANT CATARACT
BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY ON JAGUAR ISLAND
BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY IN THE ABANDONED CITY

GREAT MARVEL SERIES

THROUGH THE AIR TO THE NORTH POLE
UNDER THE OCEAN TO THE SOUTH POLE
FIVE THOUSAND MILES UNDERGROUND
THROUGH SPACE TO MARS
LOST ON THE MOON
ON A TORN-AWAY WORLD
THE CITY BEYOND THE CLOUDS

SPEEDWELL BOYS SERIES

THE SPEEDWELL BOYS ON MOTOR CYCLES
THE SPEEDWELL BOYS AND THEIR RACING AUTO
THE SPEEDWELL BOYS AND THEIR POWER LAUNCH
THE SPEEDWELL BOYS IN A SUBMARINE
THE SPEEDWELL BOYS AND THEIR ICE RACER

DAVE DASHAWAY SERIES

DAVE DASHAWAY, THE YOUNG AVIATOR
DAVE DASHAWAY AND HIS HYDROPLANE
DAVE DASHAWAY AND HIS GIANT AIRSHIP
DAVE DASHAWAY AROUND THE WORLD
DAVE DASHAWAY, AIR CHAMPION

CUPPLES & LEON CO., Publishers, New York

Copyright, 1927, by
CUPPLES & LEON COMPANY

BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY IN THE ABANDONED CITY
Printed in U. S. A.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Surging Torrent	1
II.	Terrible Foes	10
III.	Quick Action	21
IV.	An Unexpected Rescue	34
V.	Dauntless Resolution	41
VI.	An Attack	52
VII.	In the Slimy Coils	62
VIII.	The Face in the Water	75
IX.	A Passage Through the Rocks	84
X.	The Scream in the Passage	90
XI.	In the Hands of the Enemy	99
XII.	The Writhing Serpents	108
XIII.	Singing Arrows	114
XIV.	Retribution	126
XV.	The Deadly Lash	135
XVI.	A Daring Project	144
XVII.	Taken by Surprise	150
XVIII.	Japazy Speaks	155

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
XIX.	A Desperate Situation	161
XX.	In the Dungeon	170
XXI.	Words of Doom	176
XXII.	The Gnawing Teeth	182
XXIII.	A Sudden Leap	188
XXIV.	Terror	194
XXV.	Over the Waterfall	200

BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY IN THE ABANDONED CITY

CHAPTER I

THE SURGING TORRENT

THE water sped by Bomba like a wild thing lashed by terror. Logs filled it, trees, bushes, ruins of huts torn up by the earthquake and flung into the mad tumult of the river.

Far up on the river bank stood Bomba, the jungle boy, staring with habitual stoicism at the awful spectacle. The body of a native floated by. Bomba started forward, moved by an impulse to help, only to stop when he saw that nothing more could hurt that bit of human clay. The native was dead.

The jungle boy watched the body disappear in the swirling débris, thinking in his heart:

"Bomba might have been that man, with no more life in him than the uprooted trees that pile upon his body. But Bomba is here. Bomba is safe."

Almost as though to remind him that this was no time to congratulate himself, the earth trembled and undulated, snakelike, beneath Bomba's feet, flinging him upon his face.

He lay there, arms outspread, feeling the ground crawl like a slimy thing. Had he been a native, he would have called upon the gods of the jungle to save him from the fate that threatened him.

Deeper in the jungle he heard a titanic rending and groaning, as trees toppled and fell to the ground with a crash. He looked about him apprehensively. He was filled with a deathly nausea as the earth writhed beneath him.

He struggled to his feet and supported himself with a hand against a tree trunk, while his eyes stared at the spot where had once been Jaguar Island.

The place it had occupied was now a wild waste of swirling waters. Clouds of steam rose high in the air, caused by the torrents of boiling lava that were still coming from the submerged volcano of Tamura, that dread volcano to which he would have been offered as a living sacrifice if it had not been for his quick wit and dauntless daring.

While he was pondering over the awful fate from which he had so narrowly escaped, Bomba felt the earth lift again in a terrible convulsion.

The ground began to slide from beneath his feet, and with a gasp the boy flung himself backward, twining his fingers in some of the creepers that hung from a tree above him.

He was only just in time. A portion of the river bank slid with a sucking sound into the water. Bomba's grip alone withheld him from being engulfed. The waters of the rushing torrent surged hungrily about his feet.

Not for nothing was the lad as strong as the jungle jaguar, as nimble as Doto, the monkey. He swung himself upward, and, as the tough vines held, found himself once more safe on ground that still remained firm.

"Bomba must get far from here," the boy muttered to himself. "This place is the dwelling of death. At any moment the earth may open or the river come higher and swallow up the ground and Bomba with it."

However, it was easier to determine on flight than to accomplish it. The quaking of the earth continued and Bomba, trying to run, was flung repeatedly to the ground, only to struggle to his feet again and stumble blindly forward.

But the peril of falling trees in the forest seemed to be even greater than that which might await him nearer the shore, and after a while he stopped, gasping for breath, awed by the forces of nature that were arrayed against him.

"Bomba must wait," he muttered to himself. "The earth will become quiet soon, and then he can go on."

Once more he stood near the bank, watching the waters rush madly by. Many animals had been caught in its ruthless grip and were swept along as helpless as chips upon the waters of a cataract.

In a few minutes Bomba had counted five pumas and seven jaguars. They tore wildly at the river bank, but their claws could find no hold.

"Even the puma and the big cat are helpless against the earthquake and the rushing torrent," mused Bomba. "It is strange. Jaguar Island has been swallowed by the hungry waters, and all that dwelt upon it are dead, all except Bomba. Perhaps—" and here a gleam lighted his somber eyes—"Bomba has been saved because there is still work for him to do."

The light faded from his eyes and the mouth of the jungle boy became straight and grim with purpose.

"One thing Bomba will yet do," he declared. "Bomba will meet Japazy, the half-breed. Bomba will tear from his lips the truth about his birth. Japazy must tell. Japazy shall tell. It is Bomba who says it."

It had been a bitter disappointment to the lad, after having braved numerous perils of the jun-

gle, to find, on arriving at Jaguar Island, that the half-breed who held rule over the people and whom Bomba sought was absent on some mysterious errand.

But there was still hope. Japazy at least had not perished with the other luckless inhabitants of the doomed island. Somewhere in the world of the jungle the half-breed still lived, and Bomba had no doubt that some time he would find him and get from him the knowledge of his parentage —a knowledge that it seemed only Japazy had power to impart.

The thoughts of Bomba turned to Cody Casson, his one white friend, who had wandered off, half-demented, into the jungle. Where was the old man now? Had he survived, or was he lying even now, a mere heap of bleaching bones beneath the pitiless sun?

Bomba had hoped to find Japazy quickly, to gather the information for which he hungered and return on swift feet to the village of the native chief, Hondura, who had promised to search for Casson and take good care of him if found. Perhaps, Bomba comforted himself, the poor old man was now safe with the chief. But it was a forlorn hope, and Bomba knew it.

The lad aroused himself from his musings abruptly. From somewhere had come a faint cry. Or had he imagined it?

"Help!" came a native voice in wild appeal from the river. "Help or I die!"

Bomba's eyes searched the surface of the torrent and saw, borne toward him at amazing speed, the form of a native clinging to the trunk of a tree.

The fingers of the man were cramped and weary. They were slipping from the slimy trunk. In another moment he would let go and be helpless in the grip of the flood, a bit of human driftwood carried on to destruction.

With a sharp exclamation, Bomba darted down the river bank. He lost his footing and slid some distance toward the water, in danger of meeting the very fate he was trying to ward off from another.

But he caught at some tough vines and halted his mad descent on the very brink of the stream.

The native was within two feet of him, still clinging weakly to the log. The terror of death was in his eyes, and the agonized appeal in those eyes went straight to Bomba's heart.

Lying face downward on the bank, maintaining a strong grip on the vines, Bomba swung his feet as far over the water as they would reach.

"Take hold with your hand!" he cried to the native. "It is the one chance. Quick!"

With a strength born of desperation, the native flung himself forward, at the same time re-

leasing his hold upon the trunk. His fingers touched one of Bomba's feet, wound themselves about it and held on frantically.

Bomba felt the earth quiver beneath him. What if the bank should break loose and slide into the river as part of it had done before! Then his plight and that of the man he was trying to save would be hopeless.

Slowly, inch by inch, he made his perilous journey upward until his fingers closed on a sapling. This gave him the purchase that he needed.

Quickly now he pulled himself up to level ground. Then he reached out a hand to the Indian and drew the fellow up beside him.

For some time the Indian lay panting and speechless. Bomba saw that the man was on the verge of utter exhaustion. A few moments more and he would have been simply one more inanimate body that the river had claimed as its victim.

He was a tall, lank fellow, this native, thin almost to the point of emaciation. He had hawk-like features, a firm jaw, and an expression less brutal and more intelligent than most of the folk in this part of the jungle with whom the boy had come in contact.

The man looked up at him. His eyes were dulled by suffering and terror, but behind this veil burned a light of gratitude.

"It is to you that Gibo owes his life," the man

said in a guttural voice. "Because of that the life of Gibo is yours to do with what you will. You are master, Gibo is slave."

The deep emotion in the voice of the native warmed the lonely heart of Bomba. He smiled and said slowly:

"My name is Bomba. Bomba is glad that he could save the life of Gibo. But Gibo owes Bomba nothing."

"Gibo owes Bomba his life," the native repeated doggedly. "That is not nothing. Bomba is master, Gibo is slave. Gibo will go where Bomba leads."

"Has Gibo seen Bomba before?" asked the jungle lad, who did not remember having seen the man among the natives of Jaguar Island.

"Gibo looked upon Bomba from afar," was the reply. "He did not dare go near the stranger who could put his hand on the cooanaradi and not be bitten. He thought the stranger must be a god."

Bomba could with difficulty restrain a smile as he recalled a ruse that had undoubtedly saved his life while he was in the house of Japazy on Jaguar Island. He was on the point of explaining what had seemed to the superstitious natives a miracle —how he had escaped death from the poison fangs of a cooanaradi. But he reflected that it

might be well to have Gibo remain under the deep impression that the incident had produced.

"Bomba can do many things," he announced gravely. "It was not well that the people of Jaguar Island planned to kill Bomba. Tamura was angry and sent out his floods of fire and punished them. Bomba is still alive, while the people of the island have now gone to the place of death."

"It was bad of my people to do harm to the stranger," confessed Gibo humbly. "But Gibo had no part in the councils of the elders."

Bomba was about to answer when suddenly he jumped to his feet, eyes fastened on the rushing river.

Gibo followed the direction of Bomba's gaze and gave vent to an exclamation of terror.

Down the river, hurried on by the rushing torrent, came a swarm of alligators.

"Run!" shouted Bomba to Gibo. "They are headed for this spot! To stay in their path is death!"

CHAPTER II

TERRIBLE FOES

THE alligators were being carried by the current to a point of land that jutted out from the mainland about two hundred feet from where Bomba and Gibo stood.

It was certain that many would be thrown upon this point, and as they could run almost as fast on land as they could swim in the water, the peril to the two wanderers was manifest.

The beasts were crazed by fear. Ordinarily they would have sought refuge from the great convulsion of nature that was going on by sinking to the mud of the river bed and waiting there until the tumult of unchained forces was over.

But the quake had extended beneath the river bed and had shaken it in the same way as the dry earth. And the flood of molten lava that had poured into the stream had made it boiling hot in places, so that the creatures were scalded and blistered.

In their fright and bewilderment they had surrendered themselves to the current that promised

at least to carry them out of range of the disaster.

The point of land was reached with incredible swiftness. Many of the huge beasts were flung up on the shore. Right in their path were two of their natural enemies. The caymans charged them savagely. Before that attack Bomba and Gibo fled faster than they had fled from the fiery wrath of the volcano.

The ground still quaked and quivered underfoot. It was almost impossible to run. Again and again the fugitives fell to the ground, expecting to feel the snap of vicious jaws. Again and again they struggled to their feet just in time to avoid a hideous death.

If the brutes had been endowed with sufficient cunning, some could have run in different directions so as to cut off the retreat of the fugitives and surround them. But they lumbered on behind in a mass, often knocking against each other and impeding their common progress.

But they were running close to the ground and could not be so easily upset as the tall human creatures they were pursuing. And they had a reserve of strength not possessed by their human quarry. Sooner or later these advantages were bound to tell.

Bomba, looking over his shoulder, could see that the alligators were gaining. Their eyes seemed to the excited boy like points of fire,

ablaze with malignity. Their jaws were open, showing the terrible rows of teeth with which they were garnished.

Bomba shouted hoarsely to Gibo, who ran close beside him, fear adding wings to his feet.

"Up in the tree!" Bomba commanded. "Quick! It is our only chance."

The branch of a great tree swung low overhead. Bomba gripped it and flung himself aloft. Even as he did so, the jaws of a cayman came together with a grisly snap, missing the ankle of the jungle lad by an inch.

Gibo followed his leader's example. But he screamed as he did so, and as he wound his legs about the branch and clung to it desperately Bomba saw that blood dripped from his leg.

"It is but a scratch!" panted Gibo. "The teeth of the cayman are sharp. Gibo is lucky that he has his leg."

The man had courage! Bomba smiled and crawled to a heavier portion of the bough, motioning the native to follow.

"The branch bends," he said. "If it breaks, the lives of Bomba and Gibo will end."

Beneath them circled the furious caymans. Their wicked eyes gleamed savagely. Their horrible jaws opened and closed with a hungry sound of grating teeth, a sound that sent a shiver to the two who had so narrowly escaped a hideous death.

While the alligators rage around the tree trunk, balked momentarily of their prey yet hoping to get them in the end, it may be well, for the benefit of those who have not read the preceding volumes of this series, to tell who Bomba was and what had been his adventures up to the time this story opens.

Bomba, now about fourteen or fifteen years of age, could not remember ever having had any home but the jungle. He had been brought up in a little hut in the Amazonian wilds, under the guardianship of Cody Casson, an aged, white naturalist, who had chosen to withdraw from civilization and bury himself with his charge in the wilderness.

Casson had always been kind to Bomba, though most of the time he was withdrawn into himself, and would sometimes let days at a time go by without speaking, except in monosyllables. When Bomba grew out of infancy, Casson seemed to wake to a sense of his obligations and began to give the boy the rudiments of an education.

But this instruction had not progressed far before an accident to Casson brought it to an abrupt end. Confronted one day by an immense anaconda that was threatening to attack Bomba, Casson had fired at the reptile with an old rifle. The weapon had burst, and some of the flying missiles had struck Casson in the head. The snake had

been wounded and had retreated, and Bomba had dragged Casson back to the cabin, where he nursed him back to physical health. But the old man's mind had been affected by the explosion, and from that time on he was half-demented. His memory, especially, was almost entirely gone.

After that the care of the little household had fallen mainly on Bomba, and the responsibility, together with his remarkable strength of muscle and quickness of mind, had developed him rapidly into a splendid specimen of boyhood. He was now stronger than most men, clean-cut, tall and powerful. He had had to match his strength and cunning against the wild beasts and reptiles of the jungle and against savage tribes of men. He was keen of vision, swift of foot and quick of wit.

His usual clothing was the short tunic worn by the native Indians, home-made sandals and a puma skin suspended from his shoulders across his chest—the skin of Geluk, the puma, which Bomba had slain, when it was attacking Bomba's friends, the parrots, Kiki and Woowoo. His hair was brown and wavy, his eyes also brown and his skin was as bronzed as that of an Indian.

The outside world was a sealed book to him. He loved the jungle and its fierce fight for survival. But at times he was oppressed by a great loneliness. He had no companions except Cas-

son and certain of the birds and monkeys with which he had made friends to such an extent that he could largely understand them and they him. The natives of that part of the jungle, though not hostile to him, yet kept aloof, and Bomba did not seek their companionship.

For in his heart the boy knew that he was white and different from the men and women with whom he came in contact. The call of the blood kept tugging at his heart. He knew nothing of his parents, not even whether they were still alive. But he longed to know of them with a yearning that could not be quenched. Again and again he had questioned Casson, but the latter, though he would have gladly given the information if he had been able, could not recall the facts. From certain mutterings of the old man, Bomba conjectured that his father's name must have been "Bartow" and his mother's name "Laura." Further than this, which in itself was only a guess, the lad knew nothing.

How Bomba by chance came across two white rubber hunters, Gillis and Dorn, and won their gratitude by saving their camp from an attack by jaguars at night—the craftiness with which he trapped the dread cooanaradi that sought his life—how he drove off the vultures that were attacking his friends the monkeys—how with the aid of his jungle friends he drove off the head-

hunters who were besieging his cabin—these and other adventures are narrated in the first volume of this series, entitled: "Bomba, the Jungle Boy; or, The Old Naturalist's Secret."

In one of his semi-lucid moments Casson had told Bomba that Jojasta, the Medicine Man of the Moving Mountain, could tell him the secret of his birth. Bomba resolved to go and see this sinister personage, though he was warned that he took great risks in attempting the journey.

He went, nevertheless, and found that the dangers had not been exaggerated. He underwent perils by fire and flood and earthquake, in the course of which he was enabled to save a white woman, a Mrs. Parkhurst, from the hands of the savages, and restore to her later her son, Frank, who was lost in the jungle. But after conquering almost insuperable obstacles, Bomba came at last into the presence of Jojasta only when the latter was at the point of death.

The medicine man was able only to gasp out that the information Bomba sought might be obtained from Sobrinini, the witch woman of the Giant Cataract.

This necessitated another journey even more full of peril than the former. But Bomba was undaunted, and set out determinedly on his quest. He was captured by headhunters, who had also carried away Casson, and was doomed to a cruel

death by torture. But he escaped, leading his fellow captives with him. He found Sobrinini on her island of snakes and rescued her from a revolt of her savage subjects. But she was half-crazy, and Bomba could gather little from what she said except that his conviction was strengthened that the mysterious "Bartow" and "Laura" were indeed his father and mother.

Lesser souls would have been daunted after so many disappointments, but Bomba followed a clue hinted at in Sobrinini's ravings that Japazy, the half-breed ruler of Jaguar Island, could tell him of his parentage, and set out in search of that personage. Death clutched at him at almost every stage of his journey, death by alligators, death by jaguars, death by serpents. And when after unexampled adventures he finally reached Jaguar Island, he found that Japazy was gone on a mysterious mission, which Bomba conjectured had something to do with an ancient and rich sunken city with towers of gold. The natives, suspicious of Bomba's mission, planned to slay him before their master's return. How they were thwarted by Bomba's own quick wit and the opportune coming of an earthquake and volcanic eruption is told in the preceding volume of this series, entitled: "Bomba, the Jungle Boy, on Jaguar Island; or, Adrift on the River of Mystery."

And now to return to Bomba in the fearful plight he found himself with alligators swarming beneath him and thirsting for his blood.

He and his companion crawled cautiously toward the trunk of the tree, praying that the bough that held their weight would hold. Fortune favored them, and having reached the trunk, they climbed still higher and ensconced themselves in the fork of the tree.

Here they were safe for the moment. Only then did they relax, thankful that their hearts still beat and that their lungs still breathed the air of the jungle, hot and sulphurous though it was.

"Is Gibo badly hurt?" Bomba asked the native.

For answer, Gibo displayed the wounded ankle, from which the blood still dripped.

"It is but scratch," he deprecated. "The teeth of the cayman scraped the skin from Gibo's leg, but did not touch the bone. Because his leg is still whole, Gibo could dance and sing."

Bomba smiled, for he was growing to like the native more and more and was glad in his loneliness to have some one with whom he could hold human speech.

"Gibo is brave," Bomba said, "and Gibo has need for all his bravery, for there are bad things that happen in the jungle."

Even as he spoke there came another quake,

and the tree bent suddenly halfway toward the ground. Bomba and Gibo gripped the trunk wildly to keep from being flung off into space.

"It is the earth!" gasped Bomba. "It writhes again. It seeks to kill us by its anger."

But the tree righted itself with such suddenness that Bomba and Gibo were flung violently against the trunk and clung there desperately, panting for breath.

In that second when the branches had bent earthward they were almost within reach of the caymans, but the brutes, fearing that the tree was falling, had scuttled away and had missed their chance. Now they came back again, gazing upward viciously.

"They will not run the next time," declared Bomba. "We must climb higher."

It was not easy to climb the tree, for the branches still swayed as in a great wind.

But Bomba and Gibo were like monkeys. They swayed with the swaying of the tree, wound arms and legs about the branches and held tight until the trunk had regained some measure of stability.

They were halfway up when Bomba stopped, panting.

"This is far enough, Gibo," he called to the native, who had stopped on a lower branch. "Our enemies, the caymans, are frightened. See! Even now they fall over one another in trying to

get away. Soon we can go down and be safe."

Gibo looked below and saw that what Bomba had said was the truth.

The alligators, bewildered by the disappearance of their intended victims in the thick foliage, terrified perhaps by the fierceness of the latest quake, or sensing some menace that Bomba could not discern, were departing in almost panic haste.

But when Bomba would have rejoiced, a sharp cry from the native warned him of fresh danger.

He peered through the leaves and saw Gibo crouched against the trunk, staring at something that was creeping stealthily toward him.

"Ayah!" exclaimed the native in dismay. "It is the big cat! Gibo is lost!"

The hand of Bomba flew to his machete.

CHAPTER III

QUICK ACTION

BOMBA'S instinctive action was instantly arrested by the thought that he could not use the weapon in time to save the life of Gibo.

As quick as thought Bomba dropped to the branch beneath and seized the jaguar by the tail.

At that instant the big cat sprang at the native. But Bomba held desperately to the tail, bracing himself for the tug of the great body.

The jaguar howled as he felt himself thrown out of balance. He felt himself slipping and tried frantically to retain his hold upon the bough. But Bomba tugged with all his might, and for one instant held the jaguar by the tail suspended over the ground. Then with a cry of triumph he sent the brute whirling and spinning to the ground beneath.

At this exhibition of nerve and strength the Indian stared at the white lad, awed beyond all speech. He glanced down through the branches of the tree and saw the great cat go limping away with its tail between its legs.

"Who are you?" asked Gibo fearfully of the jungle lad. "Who are you who can swing the jaguar by the tail and make it slink away in terror? Surely, he who does such things must be lord of all the jungle."

"I am Bomba," replied the lad simply. "All my life I have roamed through the jungle, fighting with the puma and the jaguar, the alligator and the boa constrictor. I have grown strong as I have grown in height. But one must be strong to live the life of Bomba."

His voice held a note of bitterness, and Gibo stared at him without understanding.

"Ayah! You are strong," he muttered. "Never have I seen such strength before. No warrior of our tribe could match it. The big cat feared Bomba as he would a god that sent down bolts of thunder out of heaven."

"It feared more the strange rumbling and growling of the earth and the swaying of the tree which he did not understand," returned Bomba moodily. "It is of those things that it is afraid and not of Bomba."

But the Indian would not accept this explanation. His superstitious mind sought to invest Bomba with supernatural powers, and from that time on he looked upon the jungle lad with deference and awe as a superior being.

"Twice has Bomba saved the life of Gibo," the

native said gravely. "From this time the life of Gibo will be spent in the service of Bomba. Gibo will be the slave of his good friend."

"Bomba will be glad of the company of Gibo," replied the lad, with equal gravity. "For Bomba is sometimes very lonely in the jungle. But now our enemies depart and the sun is high in the heavens. We must go and find some place of refuge before darkness falls upon the jungle."

Nevertheless, they lingered for a short time, reluctant to trust to the apparent safety of the ground beneath. Within the shadows of the trees and underbrush might still be lurking the caymans or the jaguar. But the branches of the tree could not shelter them forever, for a tree is no refuge from the beasts that climb, and night would be full of menace from prowling enemies.

So at length they descended cautiously and stood for a time at the foot of the tree, alert for any sound that might betray the presence of a foe.

The ground was steadier underfoot now. The fury of nature seemed to have spent itself. Reassured by the stillness of the jungle, Bomba and Gibo crept forward, their eyes and ears at tension for the slightest sound that might be alarming.

They were soon convinced that the retreat of their foes had been a real one and that for the present at least they had little to fear.

They went on then more swiftly, thankful that the sickening motion of the earth beneath them had ceased. But Bomba was not headed toward the camp of Hondura.

He had at first thought that he would go to the maloca of the good chief and then return to resume his search for Japazy. But reflection had brought a change of purpose. Why provoke once more the dangers of a long journey to Hondura and return, when he was at this moment nearer than he might ever come again to the half-breed of whom he had come in search?

So he turned his steps in what he knew to be the general direction in which lay the sunken city with the towers of gold of which he had been told. He felt sure that somewhere in that vicinity Japazy was to be found.

That is, if he were still alive. Bomba had no means of knowing how far this great convulsion of nature had extended. For all he knew, it might have embraced the zone where lay the sunken city, and perhaps Japazy also had met the fate which had overwhelmed the greater part of his subjects.

This chance, however, had to be taken, and the lad went on with resolution, determined not to stop until he had achieved the object of his quest or learned at least that the quest was hopeless.

Gibo followed silently where Bomba led. Evidently the Indian had firmly established himself in thought as the slave of this masterful stranger, and recognized no right of his own to question the purpose of his leader.

They found progress very difficult, for there were great fissures in the earth that they could only get around by making long detours. Fallen trees blocked their path, and the machete of Bomba was called into frequent requisition to hack a way through the branches.

Night came and found them almost exhausted.

"We must rest," declared Bomba. "But where shall we find shelter?"

Gibo looked about him and gravely shook his head.

"Gibo's eyes have seen no caves," he answered. "There is no shelter, unless we climb again into a tree and trust to the gods of the jungle to keep us safe through the night."

Bomba looked about for thorn thickets. But in this part of the jungle there was none so heavy and thick that wild beasts could not force their way through.

He shook his head doubtfully.

"The tree is a poor chance to take," he said. "But since there is no cave or thicket of thorns in sight, we shall have to trust to it this once.

But first we will eat the eggs of the turtle that we have gathered on the way."

They ate the eggs after they had roasted them over a small fire. And here again Gibo was filled with awe at the resources of his companion. For, as the native was about to gather dry leaves and got out the hard pointed wood and bowl with which he was accustomed to produce a spark, Bomba stopped him.

"This is better," he said, as he drew from his pouch one of the precious boxes of matches that Gillis and Dorn had given him.

He struck a match, and as the light flared up Gibo jumped back with a cry of surprise and alarm. He had never seen a match in his life.

"It is magic!" he cried, his voice trembling.

Bomba smiled. It was not for him to disclaim anything that might give him a stronger hold on his companion's allegiance.

They ate heartily, and when they had finished their meal climbed into the branches of the tallest tree they could find and there disposed themselves to spend the night.

Though asleep, Bomba's subconscious mind remained on guard. He had dwelt so long in the jungle that his senses were almost as acute as those of the wild beasts that infested it.

For a long time he slept, his arm about a heavy bough, his legs twined around some branches be-

neath, his head dropped forward on the puma skin that covered his chest.

But through that deep sleep of utter weariness a warning stalked in Bomba's mind, bringing him little by little from the unconsciousness of slumber.

Then he found himself wide awake, every nerve alert, eyes staring fearfully into the blackness of the jungle. Those eyes, trained to pierce the jungle, could at first see nothing. His ears, practiced in catching the slightest sound, heard nothing.

Yet, in defiance of his senses, Bomba *knew* that death was treading somewhere in the jungle, death that crept nearer and nearer the tree in which he and the Indian had sought refuge.

A faint rustling in the branches near him told him that Gibo too was awake and aware of danger.

Bomba spoke softly.

"Does Gibo see anything in the jungle darkness?" he asked.

"The eyes of Gibo see two other eyes," the native whispered back. "Yellow eyes that gleam like jewels in the night."

"A puma!" muttered Bomba. "He climbs a tree as the monkey climbs. Now must we fight for our lives."

But the yellow lights grew, like so many fire-

flies, until Bomba and his companion realized that there were not two eyes only in that enveloping darkness, but a dozen. They were hemmed in by a band of hungry pumas, than which there is no more vicious beast in the jungle.

"Now indeed are we lost," muttered Gibo. "One we might fight or perhaps two, but against six we are helpless."

"Only one can climb the tree at a time," declared Bomba stoutly. "We will kill them as they come. It is not yet time to give up hope."

With the words, Bomba swung himself to the branch below the Indian, stretched himself flat upon it and drew his machete.

It was a formidable, two-edged weapon, nearly a foot long and ground on either edge to razor-like sharpness. Again and again it had saved Bomba's life, and he trusted to it now.

Under other conditions he would have relied upon his bow and arrow. But, owing to the thick foliage and numerous branches, it was impossible for him to find elbow room for that weapon.

His head was cool, his arm steady. He knew that the odds were against him. But so they had been many times before, and his indomitable courage had carried him through unscathed.

And if he had to die, he would die fighting. Death, after all, was only passing in the dark

from one lighted house to another. Why should he fear it?

A rustling in the branches overhead caused him to draw back his machete, ready to strike. Was it possible that danger threatened also from that quarter?

But it was only Gibo. With the agility of a monkey he descended the tree till he reached a bough alongside of that of Bomba. There he rested and drew his jungle knife, which, while not as formidable as Bomba's machete, was capable of terrible execution.

"Would Gibo die?" asked Bomba in some surprise, for he had thought that in this encounter he would have to work alone. He had not much faith in native assistance.

"Bomba has twice risked his life for Gibo," the native answered simply. "Now Gibo would not see Bomba fight with death alone. His life belongs to Bomba."

There was no time for further speech. The ring of pumas had closed in about the tree. Out of the darkness the yellow eyes gleamed.

One puma approached the tree and, like a great cat, reached up and sharpened its claws upon it. Then, with a deadly purpose, the beast began to climb.

Bomba stiffened and his eyes blazed like live

coals. His grip closed more tightly on the hilt of the machete.

Up and up came that creeping death. Then, directly beneath Bomba, a great head thrust itself through the foliage.

The yellow eyes of the puma gleamed wickedly as they fell upon Bomba's crouching figure. With a fierce growl the brute struck. But the arm of Bomba was swifter even than the paw of the beast.

The machete flashed and bit cruelly through flesh and bone. The paw of the puma was severed completely from the body.

With a howl of rage and pain the great brute let go its grip with the other paw and went whirling to the ground.

"The machete of Bomba is sharp," exulted Gibo. "That puma will not climb a tree again."

"The knife of Bomba need be sharp to fight off the pumas," replied the lad. "See!" and he pointed his dripping weapon through the branches of the tree. "They come again to the attack."

But it was Gibo who was nearer to the second puma when it reached their place of refuge. His eyes was steady and his arm strong. Straight through the yellow eye of the puma went the blade of the knife. The point pierced the brain and the animal fell with a strangled howl to the ground in the midst of its mates.

"Two!" said Bomba grimly. "Well struck, Gibo! Your heart has courage and your arm has power. Together we may yet fight off the beasts who would drink our blood."

A third puma met the fate of his predecessors, but this time not without damage to his slayer. For a wild sweep of its claws tore a long ridge of flesh along Bomba's arm from the shoulder to the elbow.

"A little more and he would have ripped out the heart of Bomba," muttered the lad. "It is too bad that the arm drips blood. The next blow will be weaker. But Bomba still has another arm, and that can drive the machete with almost the same strength as the other."

Ordinarily the fate that had befallen the slain and wounded pumas would have struck panic to the hearts of the others, and they would have drawn off. But now they seemed more enraged than dismayed and pressed close to the tree, growling defiance.

The situation grew desperate. Bomba well understood the reason for the unusual persistence of the pumas. The small game had been driven from that region of the jungle by the awful convulsions of the earth. The pumas were hungry and had followed in numbers the scent of human flesh. Now that they had their prey apparently

trapped, they would not give up easily the prospect of a satisfying meal.

Now not one but two pumas began to ascend the trunk on opposite sides. Possibly this was due to strategy, their instinct telling them that one might have free scope for attack while their enemy was busy with the other.

Bomba was growing weak from loss of blood. His injured arm hung heavily from the shoulder, as though weighted with lead. He shifted the machete to the other hand.

The great paw of the leading puma flailed through the branches toward Bomba.

But Gibo had noted the shifting of the machete and surmised that it would put Bomba at a disadvantage. With a desperate cry the Indian launched himself forward, all the strength of his body behind a swinging blow.

The knife struck the forehead of the brute straight between the eyes, crushing through bone and sinew to the brain.

But as he struck home the puma lashed one paw out blindly and dealt the Indian a powerful blow.

Then the beast fell, striking the other climbing puma and carrying it to the ground with it.

There was another crash, and Gibo, who had been temporarily stunned by the puma's blow, whirled through the branches and fell directly upon the body of one of the slain brutes.

Disconcerted by his sudden appearance, the pumas gave back. Then they rallied again to the attack. Fate had delivered one of their enemies into their clutches.

Or so it seemed.

But the next instant another figure dropped from the tree and landed lightly on its feet, a figure whose arm dripped blood, whose eyes blazed terribly, whose knife rose and fell so swiftly that the eye could scarcely follow it.

For a moment the pumas, daunted by the furious attack, gave ground. But only for a moment. The next, maddened by the sight and smell of blood and with roars that echoed and reëchoed through the night-enshrouded jungle, they charged upon the enemy.

Lips drawn back from his teeth, Bomba met them. As the first puma sprang, Bomba drove home his machete with a terrible thrust between the ribs and dodged nimbly to one side to meet the attack of his next antagonist.

Standing above the fallen body of Gibo, Bomba was fighting like a madman.

But this could not last long. He was panting. His lungs seemed bursting. He was growing faint from loss of blood.

Then came a sound like the surging of a great sea.

CHAPTER IV

AN UNEXPECTED RESCUE

THE pumas heard the sound too, for they drew back from Bomba and stood crouched, ears flattened, growling a low defiance.

Gibo had struggled to his feet and now tugged at Bomba's arm.

"Death comes in a tide," said the native. "The caymans advance like a flood. To the tree, quick, or we are lost!"

Even as Gibo spoke, the first ripple of the tide of death broke through the trees and was almost upon them. Alligators advanced in great numbers, lured by the smell of blood and the sounds of conflict.

At sight of this new enemy, the drugged feeling that had been stealing over Bomba relaxed its grip. He leaped for a low hanging branch and swung himself from the ground just in time to escape the snapping jaws of one of the reptiles.

"Quick, Gibo!" shouted Bomba, reaching out a hand to the native, who was still confused and dizzy from his fall.

The pumas turned to face the new enemy and a terrible battle ensued. They were outnumbered, but fought at bay with snarling fury. It was a conflict to chill the blood of the two onlookers, who watched it fearfully from their vantage point in the tree.

"The gods of the jungle have been good to us," murmured Gibo. "They have saved our lives from the pumas."

"It is well," acquiesced Bomba. "But we must not stay here. Let the pumas and the caymans destroy each other. But we must get far away while they are forgetting about us in their hate of one another."

"We cannot go on the ground," objected Gibo dubiously, as he viewed the scene of carnage beneath.

"No but there is another way," said Bomba. "The trees are thick here and we can swing ourselves from tree to tree like the monkeys. In a little while we will be far from here."

So, while the grim battle to the death raged at the foot of the tree, Bomba and his companion swung themselves along from one tree to another until the sounds of conflict grew faint in their ears and at last ceased altogether.

Then they descended and threw themselves upon the ground, utterly exhausted.

By this time there was little feeling left in

Bomba's right arm. For an hour past he had availed himself wholly of the left, as he swung from branch to branch.

Now as he leaned his head against the trunk of a tree a strange dizziness assailed him. The faint, lacy tracery of bush and vine grew ever more indistinct before his dimming eyes.

He fought the feeling off with all his might, but still the queer haziness gained on him.

"Can this be death?" he murmured to himself drowsily. "If so, it is not hard. Bomba is not afraid—"

At what must have been a long time afterward, Bomba awoke to find Gibo bathing his forehead with cool water and bending anxiously above him.

"The master still lives," said the faithful Indian with a great sigh of relief as he saw that the boy's eyes were open. "The ground is wet with the blood of Bomba. But the gods will that he should live. Good! Gibo is glad."

"It is not yet time for Bomba to go to the place of the dead," replied the lad gravely.

He looked down at his arm, which felt much more comfortable than it had before.

"Gibo has bandaged the arm of Bomba," he said gratefully. "It was well done."

Gibo had indeed done his work well. He had bathed the wounded arm with water from an adjacent stream and had wrapped it about with wet

leaves and a plaster of river mud, using a strip of cloth that he had torn from his tunic and binding the rude bandage in place with stout vines that he had cut down with his knife.

The result of his ministrations was soothing to Bomba, and, though still dizzy, he felt refreshed and strengthened.

"With the help of Gibo, Bomba can sit up," he said.

Instantly the sinewy arm of the native was slipped beneath the jungle boy, helping him to a sitting posture.

"We must eat, Gibo," declared Bomba, all the needs of the situation coming back to him. "And then while the daylight lasts we must continue on our way."

So, while Bomba rested with his back against the tree trunk and his faithful machete ready at his hand, Gibo went into the surrounding region to look for food.

He returned in a short time, triumphantly bearing a small peccary that had evidently been struck and killed by a falling tree during the cataclysm of the day before.

"The pig is small but its flesh is sweet," observed Gibo, laying his prize beside Bomba. "Gibo will build a fire and the pig shall roast upon a spit. Gibo is swift in the service of his master."

The native was as good as his word, and before many minutes had passed the most succulent parts of the peccary, thrust through with a sharp-pointed stick, were sputtering and broiling over the dancing flames of a cheerful fire.

They ate heartily of the well-roasted meat, and when they had finished Bomba felt refreshed in body and spirit. He was in such splendid physical condition that he recuperated quickly from the effects of his wound. He could feel the blood flowing strongly through his veins, and he was not only ready but eager to start again upon his quest.

The meat of the peccary that was left over they partly roasted and thrust into the pouches of their belt. However scarce game might prove, they were fortified with food for a couple of days, at least. Gibo flung wet leaves on the dying embers of the fire and once more the twain plunged into the sinister recesses of the jungle.

All Bomba's thoughts were engrossed with the task that lay before him, and hours passed without his uttering a word. Then he woke to the consciousness that Gibo was with him. He looked at the native and saw that in his eyes was an unspoken question.

"What is it that Gibo would ask of Bomba?" inquired the lad kindly.

"It is not for the slave to ask questions of the master," returned Gibo humbly.

"After what has passed between Bomba and Gibo, Gibo is free to ask what question he will," declared Bomba. "Let Gibo speak freely and Bomba will answer."

"Then," ventured the Indian, "Gibo would know where the master is going? Gibo knows the jungle well, and he may tell the master what the master wants to know."

"As to where we go Bomba is sure," the lad replied. "As to how we go, Bomba is not so sure."

He paused for a moment in deep thought.

"Bomba travels swiftly as though pursued by all the evil spirits of the jungle," went on Gibo timidly. "If Gibo knew where the master goes, he might help to find the place."

"I go, Gibo," returned Bomba slowly, "to seek the abandoned city with the towers of gold that has sunk into the heart of the earth. I seek one who has gone there."

The Indian uttered a terrified cry and stood still for a moment as though almost tempted to flee.

"That is the city of the evil spirits, master," he said in a voice that trembled. "Surely, Bomba should avoid that evil place lest he be consumed

by fire or strangled by the creeping serpent, the slave of the wicked spirits."

Bomba shook his head doggedly.

"I go to the abandoned city," he replied with a voice stern with determination. "There is one who dwells therein whose secret Bomba must make his own. I seek Japazy, the half-breed, who ruled over Jaguar Island."

The Indian sagged at the knees. It seemed as though all strength had left his limbs.

"But Jaguar Island also has sunk into the heart of the earth, and all who lived upon it, except Gibo, are smothered in mud or consumed by the fires of Tamuro," he whispered, fearing to speak aloud.

"All that were on the island," agreed Bomba. "But Japazy was not there. Bomba knows, for he waited in Japazy's house and Japazy did not come. Somewhere, he still lives, and Bomba thinks that he can find Japazy in the abandoned city with the towers of gold."

The dark skin of the native took on a sickly, greenish hue.

CHAPTER V

DAUNTLESS RESOLUTION

"Do not go, master," begged the Indian of Bomba. "It is to go to death."

Bomba laughed grimly.

"I will go," he said, and his voice was like steel.

"Bomba can do much," returned the native. "He swings a jaguar by the tail. He holds at bay the hungry pumas. He mocks the alligators that seek to devour him. But it is different when it comes to evil spirits. They can be defied by no one except the gods. But perhaps Bomba is a god?"

Bomba laughed and held out a firm brown arm, his left arm, toward the native.

"This is flesh and blood, Gibo," he declared. "Bomba is no spirit, but a boy. A little while ago did you not see him bleed? The gods do not bleed. No," he went on sadly, "Bomba is a boy who greatly needs a friend who is not afraid of evil spirits nor shrinks from danger. If Bomba can find such a friend, it is well. If not, he must go on alone, for his work is not yet done."

Gibo was silent for a moment. A struggle was going on within him. Then he raised his head, and in his eyes there was a faithful devotion that Bomba could not doubt.

"Gibo will not fear the evil spirits so long as Bomba leads the way," he said. "Bomba has thrice saved the life of Gibo, and Gibo would repay that debt."

They then continued on for some time without speech. Then Gibo said, as though the words were uttered against his will:

"If Bomba seeks the abandoned city with the towers of gold, Gibo can lead him to it."

Bomba's eyes glistened.

"Gibo knows the way?" he inquired.

"Gibo has cause to know and fear the spot," answered the Indian somberly. "But since the heart of Bomba is set upon this thing, Gibo will lead him to the place where the evil city once stood."

"Gibo is a good friend," cried Bomba. "Is it a journey of many days, Gibo?"

The native shook his head.

"Since yesterday the face of the earth is changed," he said. "There are valleys where there have been mountains, mountains where valleys stood. It is not only Jaguar Island that has sunk. All places are different from what they were."

"Yes," agreed the lad, "Bomba knows that to be true, for nothing looks the same in his eyes."

"And for that reason we must travel for many days away from the river and then toward it again before we can reach the place where the abandoned city stands," went on Gibo. "Many of the trails have been blotted out, but the moon and stars will help us find the way."

He paused and remained in thought for a few moments, while Bomba watched him intently.

"Gibo may be wrong," said the native at last. "He may lead Bomba to the place of evil sooner than he thinks. But whether the way be long or short, Gibo will do his best, if Bomba is willing to follow where he leads."

"Bomba is content," the lad replied.

They proceeded for some distance in silence, Gibo now leading the way. At length the Indian said, without looking back:

"Bomba has spoken of a secret that he must learn. Is it for this, then, that he would brave the evil spirits of the abandoned city?"

"This and this alone," answered Bomba moodily. "It would be hard for Gibo to understand, if Bomba did not tell him all the story of his wanderings."

"It is for the master to say," returned Gibo. "His heart may be less heavy if he tell. And it

may be that Gibo can tell him some of the things that he would know. Gibo knew Japazy."

Bomba hesitated. Then the thought came to him that this man had known Japazy. Perhaps he had noticed something in the life of that sinister half-breed that might give Bomba some light on the problem that troubled him.

So, after a moment of hesitation, he said gravely:

"Bomba can trust Gibo. Gibo must repeat to no man what Bomba tells him. That Gibo must promise."

"Gibo promises that he will tell no man what Bomba may say to him," vowed the Indian.

So, going back to the very beginning when he had first realized that he was different from the natives of the jungle, Bomba recounted his adventures to Gibo. He told him of the tug at his heart to find his father and mother. He told him of the white people he had encountered, Gillis and Dorn, the rubber hunters, of Mrs. Parkhurst, the woman with the golden hair, of Frank, her son, to whom Bomba had been so strongly drawn. He told also of his conflicts with beast and serpent, the attacks of the headhunters, the voyage to the Giant Cataract, to the Moving Mountain, and his rescue of Sobrinini from the Island of Snakes. As Bomba talked Gibo's eyes grew big with wonder and unlimited admiration.

"And Bomba braved alone the island of that hag, the witch woman, Sobrinini!" murmured Gibo. "There are demons on that island, too, demons in the form of writhing serpents. Was not Bomba afraid?"

"Bomba is not afraid of demons," answered the boy proudly. "Bomba does not believe in demons. Bomba is white!"

"And Bomba knows not why he came to the jungle nor why he must dwell here when he longs to live with his own people," continued the native musingly. "Bomba does not know who was his father. Nor does he know his mother—"

"Wait!" Bomba put his hand beneath the puma skin that crossed his breast and drew forth the picture of the lovely woman that he had brought with him from the dwelling of Japazy.

"Look!" said Bomba, and, being after all only a boy, his voice trembled as he spoke. "Bomba does not know, but he thinks that this was his mother."

The native paused and took the picture reverently in his hand. He studied it intently, his brows brought together in a frown.

"Gibo has seen this picture before," he announced at length. "It was in the house of Japazy."

"It was from the wall of Japazy that Bomba

took the picture when Tamuro spoke in a voice of thunder," said Bomba.

"Gibo went one day to the house of Japazy," went on the native. "He had been sent by Abino to take a message to the chief. He saw Japazy standing before the picture, and when he turned away Japazy's face was not good to see."

"I think Japazy hated the woman of the picture," said Bomba. "And from what Bomba heard when he was on Jaguar Island he thinks too that Japazy slew Bomba's father."

"That Gibo does not know," replied the native. "But he thinks that this is the mother of Bomba."

"Why?" cried the lad. "What is it that makes Gibo speak such words?"

"Because the eyes of Bomba are like the eyes of the woman in the picture," replied Gibo as he handed back the treasure. "Though one pair is in the head of a woman and the other is in the head of Bomba, they are the same."

Bomba was speechless for a moment, while in his heart grew such a pride and hope and wonder that he was swept away on an overwhelming tide of emotion.

"Bomba never saw his mother, Gibo," he said in a broken voice; "or if he did, he does not remember."

"It is hard to bear." Gibo spoke gravely and

in a soothing tone that brought balm to the lad's sore heart. "But some day Bomba will see his mother."

Bomba looked at the kindly face of the native and asked, with a catch in his breath:

"Why does Gibo say this thing, that some day Bomba will see his mother?"

"Because mothers are a blessing of the gods," returned Gibo simply, "and it is not written that the mother should be forever parted from her son."

Bomba did not question the logic of this. He felt hope rekindle in his heart. He thought of Frank Parkhurst and the golden-haired woman that was his mother. How Bomba had envied the boy his precious possession!

But suddenly the face of Bomba fell and his heart felt as heavy as lead.

"But Laura is dead!" he said, speaking his thought aloud.

Gibo shot a quick look at him.

"Laura is the woman in the picture?" he asked.

Bomba nodded.

"Yes," he replied. "Or so Bomba thinks. But Laura is dead."

"Why does Bomba say that? How does he know that it is true?" asked Gibo.

Bomba hesitated, and then realized suddenly that he did not know. Casson had not told him

that Laura was dead, nor had Sobrinini. But Casson had spoken of her as "poor, sweet Laura" and from the grief in his tone Bomba had caught the impression that he was speaking of the dead.

"Bomba does not know," he said, as he met the gaze of Gibo fixed full upon him. "He has thought of his mother as dead, but she may still live upon the earth."

The native nodded gravely.

"It is not written," he repeated, "that a mother be forever parted from her son."

It was a slender thread to hang hope upon, but Bomba hugged it close to his lonely heart.

They went on for some time after this until they came to the banks of a river. The recent convulsions of the earth had caused the bed to be filled to overflowing by the waters of other streams that had been diverted into it, so that, while ordinarily peaceful enough, it was now a rushing torrent.

"Tell me, Gibo," Bomba asked, as the Indian frowned thoughtfully at the water. "If we follow the course of this stream, shall we come at last to the place of the abandoned city?"

Gibo shook his head.

"We must first cross this torrent that rages as though stirred up by evil spirits," he replied, and Bomba noted that he looked about him uneasily.

"But we cannot cross the torrent at this place,"

Bomba pointed out. "The strongest swimmer would be dragged under before he had taken ten strokes. Then, too, the piranhas would tear pieces from his flesh and caymans may be lurking in the water. It is too wide to fell a tree across, nor have we any boat that could make the passage. We could make a raft, but against the force of the waters we could not steer it to the other shore."

"And yet we must cross," muttered the native.

"We will cross," Bomba assured him. "But we must go further up until we find a place where the stream narrows. And let us go at once. For while we stand here we lose time, and Bomba's heart is troubled until he can have speech with Japazy."

The Indian assented, but his brow was troubled. The tumbling waters had revived again his superstitious fears. He was brave enough in matters that he could understand, but he shuddered before the unknown.

"What is in Gibo's heart?" questioned Bomba.

The native shrugged his shoulders as though to cast off the burden that was oppressing him.

"We are drawing near to the place of the evil spirits," he said. "Bomba does not fear, for Bomba is white. But Gibo fears because he is a caboclo and believes in the power of the evil ones to destroy his soul. But Gibo is the slave of

Bomba, and where Bomba goes Gibo follows. We will go on."

Although Bomba did not actually fear the evil spirits, he had been reared in the jungle and there were times when he was inclined to believe that they had been active in laying pitfalls for unwary feet in the wild and trackless Amazonian wilderness.

But Gibo knew the country, changed as its topography was by the power of the earthquake. His sense of direction was as unerring as the scent of a hound. He led the way steadily through swamps and around waterfalls, sometimes through the topmost branches of the trees, toward the spot where the city with the towers of gold once gleamed in all its glory.

Breath was needed for their arduous task, and, except at rare intervals, neither of the pair spoke. Gibo was engrossed with his work as guide, and Bomba was so immersed in his own thoughts that he was glad to be able to ponder them without interruption.

As they penetrated further into the jungle the brushwood became so dense, the vines so tough and intertwined that more and more Bomba and Gibo depended for their progress on swinging from tree to tree.

They came upon tribes of apes, fiercer and stronger than any that Bomba had ever met in

the part of the jungle where lay the cabin of Pipina. It was evident that the apes looked upon the travelers as interlopers and resented the intrusion on their solitudes. They had not yet ventured to attack the humans, but their attitude was decidedly hostile, and the creatures gathered in groups and chattered angrily as Bomba and Gibo passed.

"We must be careful, Gibo," Bomba warned his companion on one occasion when a tribe of monkeys had followed them for some distance through the trees, threatening at every moment to attack and only held back apparently by the caution of their leader. "If we were to hurt one of these monkeys, it would be bad for Bomba and his good friend Gibo."

"Bomba speaks good words," returned Gibo, looking up into a great tree beneath which they were passing. "It is not well—jump, master, jump!"

His voice rose to a scream.

Bomba obeyed instantly and leaped quickly to one side.

CHAPTER VI

AN ATTACK

BOMBA had acted just in time, for even as he leaped aside, a giant castanha nut crashed to the ground on the very spot where he had stood a moment before. Had it struck him, beyond a doubt it would have fractured his skull.

He looked up and saw an ugly, grizzled face looking at him through the branches, the face of a great ape whose features were convulsed with rage and disappointment at having missed his kill.

Quick as thought, Bomba slipped his bow from his shoulder and fitted an arrow to the string. At the motion the ape retreated through the branches. His huge body offered an easy target, but Bomba held his hand and slowly lowered the bow.

"No," he said. "Bomba could kill him but he will not. A hundred might come in his stead. It is well not to make them too angry."

The native nodded his head approvingly.

"They are wise words that Bomba speaks," he replied. "We must go softly, for in this part of the jungle the beasts are wary and savage and

easily offended. Even the parrots scream at us, and there is no friendship in their screams."

"It is not so with the monkeys and the parrots in the place where Bomba dwelt with Casson," observed Bomba. "There they are good friends of Bomba. They come to hear him play music on the magic pipe. They talk to Bomba and Bomba talks to them in their own language. Once or twice they have even saved the life of Bomba. But here all look on us with the eye of hate."

Here the lad fell to musing moodily and no words passed between him and Gibo for a long time.

Bomba was very sad. All his friends he had left behind him. They were pitifully few, but they were all he had and he loved them. There were Casson; Pipina, the squaw; Hondura, the friendly chief, and his little daughter Pirah; Polulu, the friendly puma; Doto, the monkey; Kiki and Woowoo, the parrots. All these good friends were far away. He might never see them again. He had with him now only Gibo.

After a long detour, almost a semicircle, they came out once more on the bank of the river. The torrent had subsided. Once more the stream ran sluggishly between banks overgrown with rank vegetation.

Bomba pointed with eager fingers to a tree trunk that stretched across the river.

"We can cross the stream now, Gibo," he said. "And once upon the other side, shall it not be soon that we find the spot on which once flourished the city with the towers of gold?"

"That shall we, Bomba," returned the Indian. "We are now but a little way from the place that Bomba's heart desires. If Bomba is patient, Gibo will keep his promise."

"Gibo speaks well," cried the lad. "Come, let us cross to the other bank."

The tree trunk was smooth and overgrown with moss. But Bomba and Gibo, swift and sure-footed, crossed it without a slip.

Once upon the farther side of the stream, Bomba felt a rising sense of elation. At last he seemed to be nearing his goal. Soon, perhaps, he would find the half-breed, Japazy! Soon, perhaps, he would know the answer to the question that burned in his soul!

But Gibo was beginning to lose some of his stoic calm. Bomba noticed that the man looked often and fearfully over his shoulder into the shadows of the jungle, that the sharp snapping of a twig underfoot caused him to jump.

"What is it that Gibo fears?" asked the lad at last, curiously. "No jaguar is stalking us through the jungle that Gibo should look behind him so fearfully. No angry tribe of monkeys follows overhead. No serpent hangs with hissing tongue

from the branches of a tree. What is it then that Gibo fears?"

"It is something worse than poison snake or creeping jaguar that Gibo feels in the air around him," answered the native. "There are evil spirits in this place, demons that steal away the hearts and minds of men. It is these that Gibo fears, and he would turn back, if it were not for the promise he has given to Bomba."

"Bomba would not keep Gibo against his will," said the jungle boy earnestly. "Bomba does not fear the evil spirits because he is white and does not believe that there are such things. But Bomba would not have Gibo suffer for his sake. Turn back then, Gibo, before it is too late and Bomba will find his way from this spot alone."

But the Indian shook his head.

"Gibo has none to mourn him if he never returns," he said. "Gibo is alone in the world, and since his life has been saved by Bomba it is to Bomba that he gives it."

Seeing that the grateful Indian would not be swerved from his purpose, Bomba urged no more and they went on swiftly together toward the site of the sunken city. They had not tasted food since early that morning, and both were beginning to feel the gnawings of hunger.

They had but a few scraps of food remaining

in their pouches, and it was incumbent on them to replenish their supply.

"We must have food so that we shall be strong when we stand in the presence of Japazy," said Bomba. "We will get enough now so that we shall not have to think of it again before we reach the abandoned city."

But food was hard to find just then in that wild region, for most of the animals had fled from it in terror during the earthquake.

After an hour of fruitless search Bomba paused and held up his hand as a warning to Gibo, who followed just behind him.

"There is something that moves," he whispered. "From the color of its skin it seems to be a tapir. We shall yet have meat for dinner."

The bow twanged as the arrow winged from it.

Bomba was startled by a shrill, almost human scream. This was not the grunt of a wounded tapir!

He darted toward the spot where something lay inert upon the ground, and Bomba, to his consternation, saw that he had shot, not a tapir, but a monkey, one of the great apes whose unconcealed hostility had given them such uneasiness.

There was the sound as of a great wind sweeping through the trees, the rumble of many angry and threatening voices. Vengeance was brewing for the slayer.

As the monkey tribe came surging through the branches, Gibo caught the lad's arm.

"Quick!" he exclaimed. "Gibo will show Bomba the one way of escape."

Bomba did not stop to argue. He knew what swift vengeance the monkeys, when in numbers, meted out to the slayer of one of their tribe.

If they reached him, they would tear him limb from limb. His bow and arrow, his machete, his revolver would be useless against such an onslaught.

So he followed Gibo, fleeing before the wrath of the great apes.

The native pushed aside some branches and disclosed a dark hole.

"Quick!" he panted. "The jaguar, the puma, the cooanaradi may dwell here, but this is the one chance of Bomba and Gibo for life. Let Bomba enter and Gibo will follow."

Bomba plunged into the opening and like a flash Gibo followed, carefully rearranging the bushes over the opening.

"If they have not seen us, we are safe," gasped Gibo.

"Let us go further within the cave, Gibo," counseled Bomba. "That will give Bomba room to use his bow and arrows if the apes come in. And then it may be that this cave has another opening in some other part of the jungle. Come!"

The chattering of the angry monkeys came toward them like the onrushing waters of a tidal wave. As Bomba and Gibo felt their way along the damp sides of the cavern, they expected at almost every moment to hear the thudding footsteps of their pursuers close behind them.

The wave of sound came nearer, reaching the very entrance of their hiding place, then broke in an angry flood over the cavern and surged off into the distance.

For a long time Bomba and Gibo stood still, listening.

At last the furious uproar died away and all that could be heard was the screaming of the parrots as they flaunted their gorgeous plumage in the branches of the trees.

"Bomba thinks the danger is over, Gibo," said the jungle lad. "The monkeys were confused and passed us by."

"They may come back," returned Gibo. "It is still not safe to venture out into the jungle."

"Did Gibo know this cave, that he came to it so straight when the monkeys became angry?" asked Bomba curiously.

"Gibo came this way once before," replied the native. "He found this refuge, Bomba, and so saved the life of Gibo from two hungry jaguars that stalked him through the jungle."

Bomba looked about him trying to pierce the blackness.

"It is dark within the cave, Gibo," he said. "We must find our way back to the hole's mouth and wait there till it is once more safe to go out into the light of the sun."

But when they would have followed Bomba's advice, they found that somewhere in their retreat into the recesses of the cave they had become involved in a maze of turnings.

"There are more passages that one," muttered Gibo, his fingers feeling along the dank, mossy sides of the cave. "We must have taken the wrong turning. Gibo knows not this portion of the cave, or whether it leads to good or to evil."

"Let us go on, then, Gibo," counseled Bomba. "The cave had a beginning. It must also have an end. Come, we will follow this passage till we find that for which we seek."

The cave was as dark as the jungle night. From time to time Bomba struck a match that revealed for a moment their surroundings. But his stock of those precious commodities was growing dangerously low, and he did not dare to use too many of them.

It was perilous work, stumbling through the darkness, not knowing what grisly perils were concealed from them by that black curtain.

The jaguar and the puma made their homes

in just such caves as this. It would be almost a miracle if the cave were found to be uninhabited.

For a long time the two groped and stumbled along, coming up at last against a blank wall that marked the end of the tunnel.

They were hungry as well as weary, and Bomba regretted the mistake he had made with growing bitterness.

"Bomba is a fool," he told the patient Gibo. "Never before has he mistaken a monkey for a tapir. His eyes must be growing dim and his brain weak."

"The eyes and brain of Bomba were not to blame," replied Gibo soothingly. "The foliage of the tree was thick. Gibo, too, thought it was a tapir until he saw the monkey lying on the ground."

"Bomba is sad," observed the jungle lad. "He would not hurt a monkey. Many of the monkeys are his friends."

"It would be well to forget and to give thanks to the gods that Bomba and Gibo did not fall before the wrath of the angry tribe," returned the native.

But it seemed for a time as though they had escaped one peril only to fall into a trap from which there was no escape. It appeared that

there were many underground passages, but none they traversed led to an opening.

They came to one that was new to them, and as it seemed to have fewer turnings than any of the others their hope revived that it might prove the main passage.

But as they followed this new lead hope gradually gave place to irritation, almost despair.

"This but leads us further underground, Gibo," said Bomba. "The air grows hot. Perhaps it is like the Moving Mountain that has fire in its heart to destroy all who enter."

Indeed the air grew more intolerable with every step they took.

"We must turn back, master," said Gibo at last, pausing to wipe the perspiration from his face. "Surely this leads into the heart of a mountain."

"Gibo speaks truth," returned Bomba. "We must go a different way unless we wish to leave our bones in this pit of death."

But as Bomba turned to retrace his steps he was halted by a cry from Gibo.

As he turned toward the Indian the cry grew to a terrified scream!

CHAPTER VII

IN THE SLIMY COILS

"HELP, Bomba, help!" came the cry. "Help or your servant dies!"

As Bomba plunged wildly forward in the direction of the shriek he heard a hideous, sibilant hissing.

Again and again the screams of Gibo rang through the stifling air of the tunnel, accompanied by the sounds of a terrible struggle.

No need now for Bomba to wonder what danger threatened his friend. Gibo was in the coils of the terror of the jungle, the wicked anaconda. Bomba knew that he must act quickly if he would prevent his faithful companion from being crushed to death.

He whipped his machete from his belt and plunged blindly to the rescue. It was a fearful risk to attack a serpent in the dark. But Bomba used his hands and ears in default of eyes.

He groped forward and felt beneath his fingers the loathsome coils of the great snake. It was wound about the native in a deadly embrace. Bomba knew that those coils, strong as steel,

would tighten slowly, ruthlessly until the bones of the victim snapped beneath the pressure.

He could hear Gibo pant and struggle. His screams became feeble moans of terror, sobs of torment.

Bomba raised his arm and plunged the knife into the slimy coils. Again and again he slashed fiercely, but the steely coils still held. A few moments more of this and life would be crushed from Gibo, his good and loyal friend.

Bomba redoubled his efforts, fighting with superhuman fury. The snake was gashed in twenty places, the floor of the cave was slippery with blood.

Half-sobbing with rage, Bomba again drove his knife into the body of the snake. This time the keen edge severed the vertebral column.

There was a terrific thrashing about as the reptile writhed in the contortions of death.

Then something struck Bomba a stunning blow on the head and felled him to the ground.

When, from the gulf of unconsciousness, Bomba swam back to a knowledge of his surroundings, he was conscious chiefly of a terrible pounding in his head. The top of his skull ached throbbingly and he could scarcely breathe.

He sensed quickly what had happened to him. One of the heavy coils in the snake's last contortions had hit him a heavy, stunning blow.

Darkness was all about him, a blackness that pressed upon him like an actual weight. Slowly Bomba reassembled his scattered senses and took a grip on himself.

He raised himself on his elbow and peered about him.

"Gibo!" he cried faintly. "It is Bomba who calls. Where are you?"

There was no answer. Remembering the folds of the giant snake, wrapped like bands of iron about the body of Gibo, Bomba wondered whether life had left the Indian before the edge of his machete had cloven the anaconda's coils.

Struggling to a sitting posture, Bomba tried again to pierce the darkness.

"Gibo!" he cried with increasing anxiety. "If Gibo lives, let him come to Bomba."

There was the sound of padding footsteps in the tunnel behind him. The heart of Bomba quickened its beats. If this were Gibo, why did he not answer? If it were not Gibo, who or what then was this that approached through the blackness of the cavern?

A big cat, perhaps, that dwelt in the recesses of the cave. Or possibly another native, not friendly like Gibo, perhaps one of the henchmen of Japazy.

As Bomba indulged in these conjectures the soft footsteps came nearer. Bomba's grip tight-

ened on the slippery hilt of the machete, which he still held in his hand. He tried desperately to drag himself to his knees, but found that he had not the strength, and sank back against the wall of the tunnel, weak and panting.

"Bomba must fight sitting down," the lad said to himself grimly. "It may be a quick fight, soon over, but Bomba will die, if he has to, with his machete in his hand."

On came the footsteps until they were almost upon him. Bomba braced himself for a struggle.

"Back!" he cried fiercely. "Let him that comes take care that the sharp knife of Bomba find not its way to his heart."

The padding footsteps halted. There was a moment of silence and then came the voice of Gibo, joyful and clear through the darkness.

"The gods be praised who have led Gibo to his master!" cried the faithful native. "Gibo thought that he would never hear the voice of Bomba again."

The muscles of the jungle lad relaxed. Relief and joy weakened him, and he sank back against the tunnel wall, conscious once more of the throbbing pain in his head.

"Bomba is thankful that Gibo still lives," Bomba said faintly. "The coils of the great snake then did not crush out the life of Gibo, as Bomba feared?"

Gibo fell on his knees and groped his way to the spot where Bomba lay.

"Master," he said quickly, eagerly, "when the great snake unwound from my body, killed by the knife of Bomba, Gibo fell, struck his head and knew no more. When he came to himself he knew not where he was. He was like a man that has taken too much of the fermented juice of roots, beaten and prepared by the women. He staggered and went, not knowing where he was going, and he came to a sharp bend in the passage and he saw—light! Master, surely the gods of the jungle are with us, for Gibo saw light!"

Bomba gripped the arm of the native.

"Then Gibo found another mouth to the cavern?" he asked, scarcely daring to believe in his good fortune.

"With the help of the gods, Gibo saw the light of day," replied the native. "Come then, master, and your slave, Gibo, will lead you to the sunshine and fresh air of the open jungle."

The joyful news brought an access of strength to Bomba, and he found on making the effort that he could stand on his feet, though rather unsteadily.

"Lead on, Gibo," cried the lad jubilantly. "Bomba has his strength back, for hope has again come into his heart."

The dead body of the snake lay across the

floor of the tunnel. They stumbled over the noisome coils and kicked them aside, coming at last to the sharp curve of the tunnel that Gibo had spoken of to Bomba.

Then the lad saw what quickened his pulse, a faint light in the distance, the blessed light of day that he had feared he would never see again.

Bomba tried to hasten his steps, but found that he still lacked his usual vigor and had to proceed slowly.

"What was it then that felled the mighty Bomba, who again has saved the life of his slave?" asked Gibo, when they had progressed for some distance along the steadily brightening tunnel.

"To Bomba it seemed that the roof of the cavern had fallen on his head," replied the lad. "But it was the thrashing body of the anaconda that dealt him a blow that might well have dashed out his brains."

"Ayah!" said Gibo solemnly. "The gods of the jungle are with us."

"Bomba is glad," answered the jungle boy briefly.

"The evil spirits led us into the cave and the lair of the great snake," Gibo averred. "The good spirits bring us again to the light. Behold!"

Bomba saw, and his heart sang with a great joy. They were at a mouth of the tunnel, and

beyond, in the familiar jungle, monkeys chattered and parrots screamed in a discord that seemed to Bomba the sweetest music he had ever heard.

A moment more and they pushed aside the bushes that formed a screen for the entrance to the cave and emerged into the brightness of the afternoon.

The air blew across their faces and they drank it in with avidity. They flung themselves upon the ground and lay there for a long time, delighting in the consciousness that they were still alive.

When they started on again it was with fresh strength and vitality on the part of Bomba, but with increasing reluctance on the part of the Indian.

"Once the gods have befriended us," he muttered, "but if we fail to heed their warnings, they will grow angry and leave us to the mercy of the evil spirits. Ayah! It is madness to go farther into this country, which is the abode of demons."

Bomba pretended not to notice the fears of the man. After a time he stopped abruptly and pointed with his hand.

"In the brushwood," whispered the lad cautiously. "What does Gibo see?"

"It is a wild peccary, master," replied the Indian in the same guarded tone.

"Is Gibo certain? Bomba's arrow, once loosed

from the bow, will not again bring down vengeance from the monkey tribe?"

"That which you see among the trees is no monkey, master, but the wild pig of the jungle," replied Gibo. "If Gibo speak not the truth, then are his eyes like those of an old man."

Thus reassured, Bomba crept a little nearer to the spot where a small animal was nuzzling for roots in the ground, unaware of approaching doom.

The jungle lad took careful aim. The bow twanged and the arrow sped straight to its mark. With scarcely a grunt the peccary rolled over, the arrow quivering in its side.

Bomba leaped forward eagerly, bent over the dead peccary and was about to retrieve the arrow when Gibo uttered a warning cry.

The lad straightened up and looked about him. The exclamation to which he gave vent was one of anger rather than fear. For, charging toward him through the brushwood, grunting and squealing with rage, came a herd of peccaries intent upon avenging their comrade.

Bomba seized the dead pig and swung himself into a tree, where Gibo had already preceded him.

"Gibo and Bomba will eat to-night," muttered the jungle boy, "even if they have to eat the meat of the peccary raw."

"Gibo is hungry enough to eat the bark of

trees," responded the native. "See, master, how the wild peccaries come. They are as many as the trees in the forest."

Both knew that there is no terror of the jungle to be dreaded as the wild peccaries when in droves. Had they fallen from the tree, the sharp tusks would have torn their flesh to ribbons. Bomba had seen all that was left of some hapless natives of the jungle who had fallen a victim to their fury, and he was not anxious to afford another example.

"It is lucky that they cannot climb a tree," observed Bomba. "We will be patient and wait till they tire of their anger and go off again into the jungle."

For a long time the wild pigs raged beneath the tree, staring up at Gibo and Bomba. But they tired finally and went off, grunting and squealing, until the last of them disappeared in the heavy underbrush.

Even then the fugitives waited for some time before they deserted their perch, fearful lest the drove return. But at last, driven by hunger, they dropped from the branches, Bomba still holding the dead pig in ths hollow of an arm.

No peccaries came in sight and when they thought that it was safe to make a fire Bomba and Gibo gathered brushwood and roasted the pig on a spit.

The meat was tender and succulent, and seldom had a feast been so delicious to the hungry adventurers.

"Though the meat of the tapir would have been good, this is better," pronounced Bomba, when both had eaten their fill. "Perhaps to-morrow we can kill another."

"To-morrow Bomba and Gibo go into dangers from which they may never return," declared Gibo moodily. "Gibo wishes that Bomba would turn back now and go no further, for Gibo fears for his life."

"Bomba must meet the half-breed Japazy and have an answer to his questions even though he lose his life," said Bomba doggedly. "Gibo may turn back, but Bomba must go on."

They traveled but little further that day, for the shades of night were coming on rapidly. They found shelter near the bank of a stream where two overhanging rocks met at the top, and there they lay down to rest till morning.

With the first rays of the sun Bomba was on the alert, urging the reluctant Gibo to greater speed. Excitement buoyed up the spirits of the jungle boy.

"We approach the sunken city, Gibo!" cried the lad. "Speak to Bomba and tell him it is so!"

"It is so," assented the Indian gloomily. "While the sun is still high in the heavens Bomba

and his slave will reach the spot where the wicked city once stood."

"That is well!" cried Bomba jubilantly. "Lead on, Gibo. Bomba wishes that his feet had wings."

All morning they hastened on, following a trail that led ever upward, until, toward noon, they came to a sparkling stream flowing between two rocky banks. In the distance they heard the musical tinkle of a waterfall.

Looking down into the pellucid waters, Bomba saw something that aroused his interest.

"I see fish, many of them, Gibo!" he cried. "By merely putting in his hand Bomba can catch enough for a good meal. Bomba would have a change from the meat of the peccary."

"We will find more and better fish further up the stream," Gibo replied. "If Bomba follows the lead of Gibo, he will have plenty on which to feast."

So Gibo led the way upstream, while the sound of the waterfall grew ever more distinct. They came at last to a part of the stream that was literally alive with fish, and there they halted. Lying flat upon the bank, they dipped their sinewy hands into the clear water and each time brought up a wriggling fish. Some were small, and these they threw back into the water, but the big ones they kept and soon had a good-sized catch on the bank.

Cleaned and roasted over the fire, the fish proved delicious indeed and a welcome variation from their meat diet. Bomba and Gibo ate with all the zest of a jungle appetite. Then they rested a few minutes, for they had traveled fast and far since daybreak.

But after a few minutes of this, Bomba jumped to his feet, throwing off the torpor induced by food and the heat of the noonday sun.

"We waste time!" cried the jungle boy. "Come, Gibo! We must reach the abandoned city while the sun still rides high in the heavens. Let us make haste."

Gibo obeyed reluctantly. The fire was extinguished, and they continued their journey along the banks of the stream.

The distant music of the waterfall had now changed into a roar, showing that the travelers were nearing it, and they presently came on a sight whose beauty momentarily robbed Bomba of breath.

Over a ledge of rocks, twenty feet high, dashed the sparkling water, in its descent flecking the foliage on either side with rainbow jewels of spray. The stream at the base of the ledge was lashed into a bubbling whirlpool of foam.

While Bomba stood entranced at the beauty of the scene, a scream rang out from Gibo that caused the jungle boy to look sharply about.

He was in time to see the Indian dart into the brushwood.

Quick as a flash, Bomba leaped in pursuit of Gibo. He overtook the man cowering in a thicket, chattering with superstitious terror.

"What is it that frightens Gibo?" cried the lad with ill-concealed impatience. "The waterfall is of much beauty. There is nothing there to make one fear. What is Gibo? Is he a man or an old woman like Pipina, the squaw?"

But the man was too terrified to be impressed by or to resent the taunt.

"A demon! An evil spirit!" he cried, covering his face with his trembling hands. "Gibo saw it with his own eyes! Let him go, lest his soul be devoured and his body thrown to the wild beasts of the jungle!"

CHAPTER VIII

THE FACE IN THE WATER

THE fear of the Indian was contagious. For a moment Bomba himself felt a wild instinct toward flight. This he conquered on the instant, and, drawing himself up, he spoke with a voice of authority.

"Bomba is white, Gibo," the lad said. "Your evil spirits have no power to frighten him. Come, take him to the place where you saw this thing that frightened you, that he may see it also."

But Gibo shook his head, still cowering in the brushwood.

"Gibo will not again go near the waterfall," he said. "Sooner would Gibo jump into the blazing fires of the Moving Mountain and be consumed with fire."

Bomba grew angry, for it seemed to him that Gibo was going back on his promise.

"Bomba has saved the life of Gibo many times," said the jungle boy gravely. "Gibo has more than once sworn to be the slave of Bomba. Is it so easy for Gibo to forget his word?"

The cringing Indian looked up at the lad. Then slowly, trembling in every limb, he drew himself erect.

"Gibo does not forget his word," he said. "He is afraid of no mortal thing. But the sight of spirits strikes terror to his soul and robs his limbs of strength."

"But Gibo promised that he would follow Bomba into the land of the spirits, even if he were afraid," the boy reminded him.

Gibo heaved a deep sigh, as though from that moment he bade farewell to hope.

"Gibo has said what he would do," the native declared gravely. "He will not again forget his word."

Then he led the way through the brushwood, retracing his steps toward the waterfall.

When they stood again upon the spot where the beauty of the scene had first burst on the vision of Bomba the lad turned to the Indian.

"Is it here you saw the spirit?" he asked.

The man put his finger on his lips.

"To speak their names aloud is to summon them," he warned. "It is from a little further up the bank that I saw the sight that made me fear. Come, Gibo will lead you to the spot."

The rank growth bordering both banks of the stream grew ever more tangled, but despite this they proceeded swiftly. They came at last to

a place directly beneath the ledge over which flashed the sparkling water of the cataract.

Here Gibo paused and pointed with trembling finger.

"It was there, master, that your slave saw the face of the evil spirit," he whispered, with stiffening lips.

Bomba glanced from Gibo to the waterfall and back again in astonishment.

"The thought of the evil spirits has driven poor Gibo mad," he muttered, thinking of the crazed witch woman, Sobrinini. Aloud, he said gently: "How could Gibo see the face of an evil spirit in the waterfall?"

"Not in the waterfall, Bomba," returned the native solemnly. "The face that Gibo saw and that struck terror to his heart was behind the waterfall."

Now was Bomba more puzzled than ever.

"Behind the waterfall?" he repeated, frowning. "Tell me how that could be, Gibo?"

The native looked at him, evidently amazed at what he regarded as his master's stupidity.

"Does Bomba not know that the face of an evil spirit can appear in any place?" he asked. "Sometimes one sees it in a thistle, sometimes peering down from the branches of a tree. Again it will stare at one from the muddy waters of an ygape. Bomba should know," he added, with a

touch of rebuke in his tone, "that the spirits of the jungle are not bound by the same laws as the men that dwell there."

Bomba's frown did not relax. He still stared intently at the waterfall.

"Gibo must tell me what kind of face it was that he saw," the lad directed. "Bomba is very curious about this spirit."

The man shuddered.

"It was an evil face," he responded. "It bore upon its face much hair that covered it all except the nose and the eyes."

Bomba laughed, showing two rows of white, even teeth.

"And Gibo still thinks that this thing that wore a beard was an evil spirit?" he inquired.

"What but an evil spirit could dwell behind a waterfall," answered the native gravely. "The eyes of this one were dark and evil and his brow was ugly like that of a demon. The lips stuck out and the beard reached down to his chest. Beyond this Gibo did not see."

"The face you speak of seems to Bomba more like that of a man than that of a spirit," observed Bomba, with a return to gravity. "Gibo is sure that he saw nothing but the face?"

"That is all, O, master," was the reply. "And now would Gibo beg of Bomba that we forsake

this place, for there is evil and terror all about us, and to linger here means death."

"We will go," the lad promised. "But first Bomba must look at this waterfall more closely. Bomba would know how it is that a man could stand behind that waterfall and live. For man it was that Gibo saw and not a spirit."

The native shrugged his shoulders.

"Bomba is white and so he will not believe," he retorted stubbornly. "But it is given to Gibo to know a spirit when he sees one, and this was a spirit."

Bomba did not reply, for by this time he had found that it was as hopeless to lead Gibo to his belief as it was for Gibo to have impressed Frank Parkhurst—the white boy who had laughed at these things—with the superstitions and fears of the natives.

In truth, the lad was much disturbed by Gibo's revelation. Provided that the Indian had really seen this thing and that the face behind the waterfall was not a product of his imagination, then Bomba had to come to the conclusion that they were not alone in this apparently deserted spot. Bomba, the jungle boy, could not free himself entirely of an uneasy feeling in the presence of the mysteries—mysteries that terrified the dark-skinned natives of the land—but he had no real belief in the supernatural.

But a man with a black beard and evil eyes had for a moment peered out at them! Again Bomba asked himself the question. How had the man found refuge behind the cataract without being dashed to death or drowned in the tumultuous waters?

"We will leave this question to be answered at another time," he announced at length. "We waste time here. Come, lead on again to the the city with the towers of gold."

Though Gibo feared the evil city, it was apparent that he feared still more to linger near the waterfall where he had seen the malign face of the spirit.

So there was no lagging in the steps that led the way. Neither spoke, for the Indian was filled with fear and Bomba was busy with pressing problems.

Bomba had heard from Casson's lips that for all mysterious things there is an explanation, if one can find it. So he told himself that there was an answer to the queer incident of the man's face seen in the waterfall. It was simply another of the things that he hoped to clear up after he had accomplished the one thing that reigned supreme in his thoughts—the interview with Japazy.

Gibo led on rapidly to high and ever higher ground. He came at last to the peak of a lofty hill and paused there, looking fearfully about him.

As Bomba reached his side the Indian pointed to a faintly defined trail that lay before them.

"At the foot of this path leading downward to the valley," said Gibo solemnly, "lies the evil city with the towers of gold, now sunk in the mud and slime of the jungle bottom. Is it the will of the master that Gibo lead on?"

Bomba stared eagerly along the trail.

"It is the will of Bomba," he cried. "Lead on, Gibo, and when we shall have met Japazy and returned from this wilderness there is nothing Gibo can ask of Bomba that Bomba will not give. For the answer to Bomba's question is dearer to him than his life."

Gibo spoke no other word, but plunged swiftly through the brushwood.

They had not gone far before they came to a great wall of débris thrown directly across the trail.

"What is this, Gibo?" asked Bomba, in dismay. "Here are stones as big as Bomba's body and trunks of trees all piled one upon the other. How can we pass?"

"This the earthquake has done," muttered Gibo. "Your servant did not know of this when he led Bomba here."

The jungle boy felt a great fury of impatience mounting within him.

"Again must Bomba put off his meeting with

Japazy!" he exclaimed bitterly. "Once more we shall have to hunt for another path. And when we come at last to the sunken city, it may be that Japazy will again have gone and the questions of Bomba will have no answer."

"This wall of stones and trees may not be a great one, master," said Gibo. "Come, we will try to walk around it."

This time Bomba went ahead, his furious impatience lending him abnormal strength. They hacked their way through branches and undergrowth and still could not reach the end of the barrier.

"We lose time," cried Bomba, stopping at last. "There has been a great shaking of the earth here, Gibo. If we climb to the top of the highest tree, we may find what lies upon the other side."

They followed the suggestion. Bomba was the first to reach the topmost branches, and from there he looked over the heaped up piles of débris.

"Look!" he cried to Gibo, as the Indian crawled out on the branch nearest him. "If we can swing from this tree into the branches of that other, we shall find ourselves on the other side of the barrier and can once more follow the trail."

Gibo looked doubtful.

"From this tree to the branches of the next is

a leap of many feet, master," he said. "Can Bomba make that distance?"

Bomba measured the distance, eyes narrowed, muscles tensed.

"Bomba will try," he said. "And Gibo—will he follow?"

"Where Bomba goes there also will be Gibo," answered the faithful Indian. "Bomba must beware though, lest he fall and break a leg, and then many moons must pass before we reach the evil city."

Bomba did not answer. He worked his way out to the end of the branch until it bent and groaned beneath his weight. Then, shifting his bow to a more comfortable position on his shoulders, he slowly lowered himself until he swung by his hands from the branch.

Then he began to swing himself, back and forth, back and forth with the rhythm and power of perfectly coördinated muscles.

A minute of this and then Bomba clenched his teeth, released the branch, and flung himself through the air.

CHAPTER IX

A PASSAGE THROUGH THE ROCKS

BOMBA'S body shot through the air, straight and swift as an arrow. As it began to fall, the lad's fingers wound about something that bent beneath his grasp, but did not break. It was a branch of the tree across the barrier!

With joy and singing triumph in his heart, Bomba drew himself up until his body rested on the branch. He saw the face of Gibo staring at him, and called encouragingly to his companion.

"Bomba is safe," he cried. "It is but a little leap for a strong man. Gibo will make it without trouble. See, Bomba stretches out his hand."

Gibo was evidently not at all certain that he could make the leap without mishap. But he yielded at last to the impatient entreaties of the jungle lad and swung himself from the branch as Bomba had done before him.

But Gibo was not as strong and lithe as the jungle boy, who had lived in the branches of trees for a large part of his life. He sprang, but did not quite reach the branch, and if it had not been

for Bomba's outstretched hand, would have fallen to almost certain death upon the rocks beneath.

But Bomba gripped the wrist of the native with muscles of steel and held him until he could get a hold on the branch.

"Again Gibo owes his life to Bomba," said the rescued man, as soon as he could speak. "Bomba is stronger than most men, although he is but a boy. What will he do when he has reached his manhood?"

"Bomba does not wish for more strength," replied the lad. "What he wants is more speed, so that he may reach Japazy before he vanishes again from the sight of men."

Once descended to the ground again, Gibo found himself at a loss. To be sure, there was no longer the wall to block their path; but though Gibo led the way back to the place where the trail should have been, there was no trail.

For a long time they searched, Bomba with eagerness, Gibo with depression and a feeling of dread.

"The face of the world has changed, O, Bomba, since Gibo was here before," said the Indian, as they paused to rest. "Where there was a trail there is nothing. Where was once a mountain is now a valley. And the valleys are high like mountains. Gibo does not know this place. It is as though his eyes had never seen it before."

"If that is so, our fate is evil," said Bomba somberly. "What are Bomba and Gibo to do?"

Gibo sat down upon the trunk of an uprooted tree and looked bewilderedly about him.

"If Bomba cannot answer that question, neither can his slave," he replied. "Gibo knows not where we are nor what way we are to turn."

Bomba threw out his hands in a furious gesture.

"Is it to be in vain, then, that we have conquered the flood and the alligators and the big snake?" he exclaimed in exasperation. "Better that Bomba should have died with the people of Jaguar Island than not find Japazy, the half-breed!"

He groaned aloud and dug his hands into the waving masses of his hair. They were lost, the native had said. Gibo knew not which way to turn.

However, this mood endured but for a moment. The boy's indomitable will reasserted itself. He sprang to his feet, eyes aflame, and whirled about upon the puzzled Indian.

"We may be lost, Gibo, but we will find the trail again," he cried. "Bomba has said that he would reach Japazy, and what he has said that will he do. There is a strength in the heart of Bomba that will lead him past a thousand deaths, a strength that will lead him at last to the thing

he seeks. Come, then, Bomba will lead and Gibo will follow."

So Bomba struggled on, fighting his way through the wilderness, cutting through tough vines and tangled brushwood with his machete, sometimes swinging through the branches of the trees with the faithful Gibo ever beside him.

But always their stumbling footsteps led them deeper into the valley, a valley guarded by great heaps of rocks and fallen trees that offered obstacles almost insuperable.

"This is the abode of evil spirits," remarked Gibo gloomily. "They are angry because mortals have dared to cross their boundaries. Gibo has warned his master many times of this, but Bomba will not listen to the words of truth."

"It is not truth, but tales for children," answered Bomba doughtily. "Some day we will find a path through the rocks, and then Bomba will laugh at Gibo and his foolish talk of evil spirits. But now, Gibo, Bomba cannot laugh. His heart is sore within him. But if he cannot laugh, he can still work and fight."

The flesh of the two searchers for the abandoned city was torn by the spiked thorns of the tari bush, their bodies were covered with caked mud and slime. For they passed through swamp lands where the muck tugged at their feet, trying to drag them down, and where they had to be on

their guard against poisonous reptiles. They must protect their steps against such dangers, while their eyes swept the branches above them for the deadly boa constrictors.

They were hungry, for small game was scarce. Again and again they found themselves being stalked by the murderous jaguar and the treacherous puma. But when Bomba whirled to the attack, the creatures slunk off into the brushwood before he could fit his arrow to the string.

The tapir and the peccary seemed to have vanished from the desolate region.

The third day of their wandering in this chaos wrought by the earthquake found them exhausted and almost starved.

"We must eat or we shall die," cried Gibo. He sank upon a rock and raised both hands to his burning head. "The throat of Gibo is dry. His limbs fail under him. He can go no further."

Bomba helped the Indian to his feet and drew one of the man's arms across his own shoulder.

"But a little further, Gibo," he urged. "The sun sinks in the sky. We must not linger here where the beasts will surround us in the dark. See. Bomba will lend you some of his strength."

They had gone but a little way further when Bomba abruptly halted and pointed at something that lay before them.

"A cleft in the rock!" he cried. "Now may

the wish of Bomba be granted and this passage lead us on to safety!"

But as he spoke the arm of Gibo tightened about his shoulder.

"Look!" cried Gibo in a voice that rose to a scream of terror. "It is the man—the man with the beard!"

Bomba shot an inquiring glance at the Indian.

"What does Gibo mean?" he asked.

"It was the same bearded face that looked at Gibo from the waterfall," replied the man, trembling.

"But the face that Gibo saw in the water he said was the face of a spirit," Bomba retorted. "Was this a spirit, Gibo, that you saw flitting among the rocks?"

"It was no spirit," admitted Gibo, "but a man, for Gibo saw him plainly with his own eyes."

"Then do not tremble, Gibo, for of men you are not afraid," returned Bomba with a touch of sarcasm in his tone. "Be brave, for we have found a passage through the rocks that may lead us to safety. And if the man with the beard stand in our way, he shall hear the singing of Bomba's arrow or feel the bite of Bomba's knife!"

CHAPTER X

THE SCREAM IN THE PASSAGE

WHEN Bomba would have forged ahead, eager to examine the cleft in the rock, Gibo held him back.

"Is it not strange, master," he asked in troubled tones, "that the face of shadows Gibo saw in the waterfall should be the same as the face he saw just now?"

"It is indeed strange, Gibo," conceded Bomba, resolutely concealing his own uneasiness. "But for every strange thing there is a reason. We may yet find out how it was that the face could look at us from the waterfall."

They went forward cautiously. Once within the cool shadows of the rocky passage the strength of Gibo returned somewhat, and he could go on without resting his weight upon Bomba.

The jungle boy led the way, perpetually on the lookout for some sign of habitation in that mysterious place. The passage through the rocks was so narrow that they had to go one behind the other. Above, on either side, towered solid walls

of rock, meeting overhead and shutting out the light of the sun.

The passage became darker as they progressed, so that they were forced to feel their way along it.

Bomba paused and uttered an exclamation of surprise. At this point the passage widened, so that when Gibo joined him they could stand side by side.

To the left of them and at the end of a dark and short passage that branched off from the main one, they heard the roar of falling water and their eyes beheld a wondrous sight.

A rushing torrent dashed down before the mouth of the cave and spread a green veil between them and the light of the jungle beyond.

"Come quickly, Gibo!" cried Bomba, in a joyful voice. "We have found the answer to one mystery, and if Bomba's thought is right we have found a way to freedom."

They hurried swiftly down the short passage until they stood directly behind the waterfall that had its source many feet above their heads.

Through the gossamer, sparkling veil, misty and indistinct, Bomba saw the rank verdure that bordered the banks of the stream.

"Speak, Gibo," cried the lad. "Does Gibo know this place?"

Gibo trembled and several times glanced fear-

fully over his shoulder into the darkness of the passage behind him.

"Yes, master," he replied. "Upon that bank stood Bomba and Gibo when the face with the beard looked at them from behind this waterfall."

"Then the man with the bearded face stood where Bomba and Gibo are standing now," said Bomba in a low voice. "Speak, Gibo. Is it not so?"

"It is even so," admitted the Indian, trembling still more. "And Gibo fears for our lives, for the face that Gibo saw was an evil face and cruel."

"But it was not a spirit face, Gibo," Bomba reminded him. "For you saw that it had the body of a man."

"Spirit or man, it was evil," replied Gibo. "And the man Gibo saw among the rocks may even now be behind us in the shadows, waiting to leap upon us as the big cat springs."

"Gibo need have no fear of what may be in the passage, for even here we have the way to freedom," declared Bomba.

The Indian was puzzled.

"The eyes of Gibo must be blind, master," he returned, "for Gibo sees not the way to freedom."

"Then indeed are the eyes of Gibo blind," asserted Bomba. "Yonder are the banks on which Bomba and Gibo stood three days ago. If our

hearts are brave we can plunge through these waters into the stream below and gain the further bank. Then we shall no longer be surrounded by walls of rock through which we cannot pass. Now do the eyes of Gibo see?"

The native nodded somberly.

"But the waterfall is swift and the whirlpool at the bottom is strong, O, master," he replied. "One might not live who tried for safety through that gate."

"Better that than to starve and leave our bones to whiten in the jungle," declared Bomba.

He took a step nearer to the waterfall, then turned back to Gibo. A strange light burned in his eyes.

"Yet would Bomba wish to find what lies at the end of yonder passage, Gibo," he said. "There is something in the heart of Bomba which tells him he is nearer now to what he seeks than he has ever been. Tell me, Gibo, are we not now near to the place where stood the abandoned city with the towers of gold?"

Gibo shook his head.

"That, master, Gibo cannot tell. Somewhere in this part of the jungle was the evil city. But Gibo is lost, because of the shaking of the earth that has changed all things."

Bomba stood for a while in deep thought, star-

ing through the pellucid waters of the cataract. Then he turned resolutely to Gibo.

"We will not seek safety through the water till we have found what lies at the end of the passage, Gibo," he announced. "If we find nothing but a blank wall of rock, we will return to this place."

The words had scarcely left his lips when there came a sound from the dim shadows of the passage that froze their blood with horror.

A scream, shrill, inhuman, blood-curdling, rose and beat against the rocks to break into a hideous cackle of fiendish laughter!

Gibo fell on his knees, holding his hands aloft in supplication, muttering fervent prayers.

"Gods of the jungle, come to us now before we are destroyed body and soul—"

Again the scream, more distant this time and dying away at last in a shuddering silence.

They waited for its repetition, but as no other sound broke on their ears Bomba, regaining his own composure, raised the shuddering Indian to his feet.

"That was no spirit, foolish Gibo," said the lad. "That was the voice of the man with the beard. Come, we will follow and see where he has gone."

Gibo clung to Bomba's arm.

"To go further in this fearsome place is madness, master!" he exclaimed. "It is the abode of

demons. Let us rather trust ourselves to the waterfall, so that if we die we shall die with the sun of the heavens over our heads. Go no further, Bomba. It is Gibo who warns of death in that passage of shadows."

But Bomba shook off the clinging fingers.

"Bomba must go on," he said doggedly. "Come or stay, Gibo. But Bomba must know the meaning of this strange place and of that awful scream."

"It was the cry of a fiend, O, master," chattered poor Gibo.

"It was the cry of a man half-beast, half-human, or a man wholly mad," returned the lad. "Do you come with Bomba, Gibo? Or will you remain behind?"

Again the faithful servant bowed to the stronger will of the jungle boy.

"Lead on, master," he said submissively. "Gibo will follow."

Bomba retraced his steps to the main passage between the rocks. In his heart was fear, dread, but also a great hope that they might perhaps have stumbled upon a way leading to the abandoned city. If that were so, he might yet stand in the presence of the half-breed and demand an answer to the questions that tortured him.

Gone for the time was all sensation of hunger,

and in its place burned a fierce excitement, a devouring impatience.

They came to the main tunnel and hurried on. Soon the light failed utterly, and they were forced to move with extreme caution and with as great silence as was possible.

Presently the passage widened. Bomba was no longer able to feel his way by running a hand against the rock wall. He stretched both arms wide and felt nothing.

"Is Gibo there?" he asked in a whisper.

"Gibo is at your side, master," came back the answer. "Speak, O, Bomba. Where are we now?"

"Bomba knows not, Gibo. But it may be that we have found an approach to the sunken city. What does Gibo think?"

"It may be as Bomba says. If so, the demons will try to block our way."

They proceeded cautiously and soon they saw a light that glimmered faintly in the distance.

"Look, Gibo!" cried the jungle boy, in huge excitement, his nervous fears forgotten. "It is a lantern! This is indeed the place for which we have searched so long! Look to the right, Gibo, and tell Bomba what it is that Gibo sees."

"Strange figures of men and beasts that shine in the light of the lantern," returned the Indian

in a shaking voice. "Go no further, Bomba, for this is indeed the place of the evil spirits."

Bomba paid no heed, but pressed on eagerly.

"Think you the statues are of gold, Gibo?" he asked. "See how they shine in the light of the lantern. They are as yellow as the full moon in the fall of the year."

"They are like to those in the dwelling of Japazy before the wrath of the gods came upon Jaguar Island," returned the Indian. "The elders of the tribe said that they were made of gold."

The primitive lantern from which came the flickering and uncertain light hung from the outstretched hand of a golden statue—that of a god, perhaps, worshiped by the one-time dwellers in the abandoned city.

Who had lit the lantern?

Flanking what appeared to be an ancient roadway were other statues of equal splendor and fashioned with an art that, had the two onlookers been able to read them, would have spoken volumes for the handicraft of those ancient sculptors who had long been dust. In the eyes of some of them were what seemed to be jewels that appeared to wink evilly at Bomba and Gibo as they passed.

They formed a strange contrast, these two adventurers into this weird realm; the boy eager, confident, unafraid; the Indian, shrinking in deadly

terror, creeping along in the shadow of the bolder spirit.

"Look, Gibo!" cried the lad. "Beneath our feet the very stones are of gold. But what is this?"

The question was elicited by a great log that barred their passage. After several attempts Bomba found that he could neither remove this obstruction nor crawl over nor beneath it.

"There is a path here at the side, master," said Gibo. "Perhaps this may lead again into the broad road."

Unwillingly Bomba turned aside, and they went cautiously along a passage that branched off at the left.

The lantern's rays did not penetrate here, and they were forced as before to feel their way.

"We know not where this leads, Gibo," said Bomba. "I like it not—"

The words ended in a sharp exclamation. It seemed to Bomba that the solid earth gave way beneath his feet. He flung out his hands, but they grasped only air.

With a despairing cry the jungle boy plunged headlong into a horrible pit of darkness!

CHAPTER XI

IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY

When Bomba at last came to himself, he had some difficulty in realizing what had happened.

His head was reeling and every bone and muscle in his body felt sore and bruised. It was only by the utmost effort that he could move at all.

In his dizzy brain he tried to reconstruct the last scene that he remembered. He recalled the log stretched across the main passage, his vain attempt to scale it or creep under it and the final turning aside into the bypath. Then had come the shock of falling, and there his memory ended.

The first impression made upon his consciousness was that it was no longer as dark as it had been. There was a faint light suffused about the place where he found himself. He wondered dreamily where the light came from. Was it the twilight or daybreak of the jungle? No, there was something about its quality that told him it was artificial.

He tried to struggle to his feet to find out, and

then he made another discovery. His feet were bound! He reached down and found that the bonds were of a kind of silken ribbon. He had never seen or felt of silk before, and it piqued his curiosity. It was so smooth and soft that it seemed as though it would be easy to break. But when he strained his feet apart he found that the bonds held as though they were withes of toughest jungle vines.

And now for the first time his dazed brain woke to a sense of alarm. He was bound. Then he must be a prisoner. He was in the hands of an enemy. And a human enemy!

He became conscious then, from a smothered groan, that somebody was beside him. He reached out his hand and felt a body.

"Is it Gibo that I touch?" he asked.

"Yes, master," came the response. "It is Gibo, thy slave, bound even as Bomba is. Gibo was following close behind Bomba and fell with him into the pit."

"Does Gibo know who has fastened our feet?" asked Bomba.

"It is the man with the beard, master," replied Gibo. "Your servant saw him as he bound Bomba. And he was such a fearful sight that Gibo's heart turned to water. He is not a man, master, though he has hands and feet even as we. He is a demon."

"Where is he now?" asked Bomba in a low voice.

"He has gone back into the cave for a little way," returned the Indian, "but he said that he would come back. Oh, if Bomba had only listened to the words of Gibo! They were wise words, even if Gibo is but a slave. Now we are in the hands of one of the evil spirits, and we shall no more see the light of day."

"Gibo's words are foolish," returned Bomba stoutly. "Bomba and Gibo are still in the land of the living. We have often looked in the eyes of death and death has shrunk back from us. Hark!"

From a little distance came that fearful shriek once more, a shriek so hideous that it did not seem as though it could come from a human throat, rising now higher and higher to terminate suddenly in a burst of fiendish laughter.

Brave as Bomba was, that awful sound chilled his blood. As for Gibo, he was trembling like a leaf.

Bomba pulled himself together.

"Let not your heart fail, Gibo," he admonished. "Bomba and Gibo are not like squaws or little children to be frightened by a sound. We have heard the scream of the jaguar and the hiss of the anaconda and have not quailed. The knife can kill. The arrow can kill. But no sound can kill."

Now they could hear the sound of padding footsteps, and a moment later a figure stood before them so fantastic, so horrible, that it seemed like a phantom of a nightmare.

It was that of a man almost a giant in height, lean, emaciated, with a hideous face, almost covered with hair, and eyes that glowed like live coals in their sockets. The features were working with hate and with demoniac triumph. All sorts of finery composed the garb that clothed him. There were silks and velvets, carelessly arranged, and some of them torn and tattered, a gold chain about his neck, a silver belt around his waist. The richness of the raiment only served to accentuate by contrast the hideousness of the face.

But the most grotesque thing about the scarecrow figure was a golden lamp that was fastened on top of his head. A wick, floating in oil, supplied the light by which captor and captives were able to see each other.

The awful figure looked down on the two prisoners, and the fiery eyes that seemed to sear whatever they touched swept over their faces.

"They wake!" cried the man in glee, as he saw the light of consciousness in the eyes of his victims. "But they wake only to die."

Gibo moaned, but Bomba stared back at the man with a gaze as unwinking as his own.

"Who are you that speak and why have you bound our feet?" demanded Bomba.

The man looked at him a moment without speaking, and then burst again into that awful peal of laughter.

Then Bomba knew that he was dealing with a madman. There was a vacancy in that laugh, a terrible shrillness, a lack of meaning that bespoke a disordered brain.

"Speak!" commanded Bomba, more with the air of a conqueror than a prisoner. "Cease your foolish laughter and speak. Why have you bound Bomba's feet?"

The peremptoriness of the tone seemed for a moment to dominate the man, and he ceased his horrid cackling.

"Ramenez saw them through the waterfall," he muttered. "He saw them when they were stumbling among the rocks. He knew that the demons would give them into his hands. And now he has them to do with as he will."

"Why should Ramenez do harm to the strangers?" asked Bomba. "They came without evil in their hearts. They had no wish to do Ramenez harm. Untie their feet and there will be peace between Ramenez and the strangers."

A look of cunning came into the glowing eyes.

"Ramenez has bound them well," he said, with a hideous chuckle. "He has tied their feet so

that they cannot run. He does not want them to run where they cannot be found. For his pets are hungry, and they demand a feast."

What he meant by this last declaration Bomba did not know, but it was not hard to guess that it was something that boded ill for him and his companion.

"They will die hard," the man said, rubbing his hands together gloatingly, "and Ramenez shall watch them while they die. It will be good to hear them scream and see them writhe. Ramenez will dance and sing. Yes, they will die hard!"

Again came that horrible outburst of laughter, more awful even than his threats.

The paroxysm of uncanny mirth almost choked him, and he went to a huge bowl of silver and, with a dipper of the same material, took out water and indulged in a long draft.

"Do the strangers thirst?" he asked, as he saw their eyes fixed longingly on the water.

Both were feverish and parched and they nodded their heads in assent. Under other circumstances they might have been suspicious that the water was poisoned, but the fact that the man had partaken of it first removed their apprehensions on that score.

"We would drink," said Bomba, and was echoed by Gibo.

The man gave them all they wanted, and this fact led Bomba for a moment to believe that there was a spark of humanity in him.

"It is good of Ramenez to give the strangers water to drink," said Bomba placatingly.

Again that hideous laugh.

"Ramenez does not want them to die of thirst," he gurgled. "He wants them to be strong when they meet his pets so that they will be long in dying. It is good to see a strong man die."

He licked his lips in anticipation.

Bomba ran over in his mind all the possibilities of the situation. It was evident that they had nothing to hope for from the man's humanity. Was there anything else to appeal to?

Who was the man, anyway? Was he a sentinel, posted perhaps by Japazy to give warning of the coming of intruders? And had the loneliness of that vigil turned his brain?

If he were indeed subject to the order of Japazy, thought Bomba, the mention of that despot might make him fear to kill his captives except at the half-breed's explicit order. Bomba had already seen in what abject fear the natives of Jaguar Island were kept by Japazy, the man who "shot lightning from his eyes."

"They are foolish words that Ramenez speaks," said Bomba sternly. "It is not well that he should talk of death to those who come to have speech

with his master. What will Japazy say if he knows that Ramenez has done this thing? He will be angry and will send Ramenez to the place of the dead."

A look of perplexity came into the man's eyes at the mention of Japazy. He seemed to be trying to force his twisted brain to remember something.

"Japazy!" he muttered. "Japazy! He is a great man. Ramenez has heard his name. Ramenez has seen him. But what he said to him Ramenez does not remember. But Japazy is a long way off and the pets of Ramenez are very near."

The ominous repetition of that word "pets" sent a shudder through Bomba's veins.

"Ramenez must try to remember," the jungle boy persisted, though he began to feel that his efforts were hopeless. "Japazy will kill Ramenez with the lightnings from his eyes if any harm comes to the strangers."

But already the man's attention was wandering. The glimmer of recollection had faded from his eyes. He began to indulge in a wild, fantastic dance, accompanied by shrill discordant utterances that might have been invocations to his gods.

"Come," he said at last as he paused panting

and almost breathless. "Come to the place that Ramenez will show you."

"How can we come when our feet are tied?" asked Bomba.

The man took from his belt a silken noose which he slipped deftly over Bomba's hands and tied into a strong knot at the wrists.

Gibo was treated in the same fashion. Then the man knelt and loosened the bonds of the feet to such an extent that the captives could walk, though with very short steps.

Then he stepped back and viewed his handiwork, while from his lips came another cackle of laughter.

"Now the strangers can walk, but they cannot run," he chuckled. "It will not be long before they will want to run but they cannot. And that is well, for the pets of Ramenez have no feet."

Before they could surmise what he meant by this, the chuckle turned to a tone of hard brutality. He drew from his belt a whip whose lashes seemed to be made of gold.

"Get up!" he cried harshly, and his whip whistled through the air.

CHAPTER XII

THE WRITHING SERPENTS

THE metal lashes stung cruelly as they fell on the backs of the helpless captives, who scrambled awkwardly to their feet. Bomba's blood was boiling with rage.

They stumbled forward as fast as they could under the driving of their pitiless taskmaster, and soon they came to a great mass of ruins that they knew at once must be the remains of the abandoned city that Bomba had come so far to seek.

There were scores of buildings that once had undoubtedly gone to the making of a great capital. Even in their shattered condition they bore the evidences of their former grandeur. There were massive remains of what had once been city walls, great pillars and columns now fallen that had once supported the roofs of temples, street upon street of dwellings and shops, statues of gold that had once adorned the palaces of the city with the towers of gold.

Many of them were submerged in what had once been mud, but now had dried into a hard

clay and cracked in numerous places. In many cases the buildings had fallen over, one upon another, leaving passages between and beneath, through which the captives and their captor laboriously threaded their way.

But the one thing that obtruded itself everywhere was the evidence of tremendous wealth that the ruins unfolded. Gold was everywhere. It seemed as though in those old times it must have been as common as copper or tin. Gold ornamented the lintels of the doorways. Gold formed the scroll work of the columns. Even the roadway was streaked with gold.

In addition to the gold there were jewels that must have been of fabulous value. Rubies, diamonds and sapphires flashed from the eyes of the statues. The wheels of chariots had their hubs encrusted with some of the semiprecious stones, such as topaz, garnet and lapis lazuli.

Bomba knew little of values, for gold and jewels had not entered into his life. But he had heard enough from the rubber hunters and from Frank Parkhurst to know in what high esteem such things were held by the people among whom they dwelt. He dimly felt that if this treasure trove were once made known to the whites they would come rushing here to get some of this marvelous wealth. And he realized, too, why Japazy had been so keen on gathering treasures from the

abandoned city. That sagacious half-breed knew what a life of ease and luxury awaited him if he could only succeed in transporting even a fraction of these riches to the lands beyond the sea.

But valuable as all these things were, Bomba would have gladly given them all for one minute of freedom with his trusty bow and arrows and his keen machete at his disposal.

Was this to be the end, he asked himself bitterly, of all the trials he had endured, the dangers he had overcome? Was his life to be wiped out on the very threshold of his goal? Was all his longing to know the secret of his birth to end in failure? Japazy, he felt sure, was near at hand, encamped perhaps somewhere in this vast abandoned city that covered many acres. And yet he might as well be a million miles away for all the chance that Bomba seemed to have of coming into his presence.

Again and again he strained at the bonds that held captive his hands and feet. But now he found, what he had not noted before, that what seemed to be cords of silk were cunningly interwoven with fine strands of some kind of metal that was very tough and tenacious. Tug as he might with all his remarkable strength, he could not break these bonds by his own unaided efforts.

Ever the crazy man urged his victims on more remorselessly, the lashes of gold rising and falling

until their backs were great masses of welts, from some of which the blood was oozing.

They came at last to what seemed the remains of a spacious and splendid temple. In the center was what might have served as a great altar, on which sacrifices were perhaps offered to the gods of the ancient people. One great statue, probably the divinity in whose honor the temple had been erected, was made entirely of gold, and two great blood-red rubies served as eyes.

The structure had originally covered a tremendous space, but a full view of its proportions was not obtainable because of masses of débris heaped high in various places where pillars had come crashing down in the cataclysm that had destroyed the city.

The pavement had been of splendid mosaics, colored with all the hues of the rainbow and cunningly set in place by the ancient artisans. But repeated earthquakes had rent these apart, so that there were great crevices between them.

Their progress had been so arduous, due to the rough traveling, the haltered condition of the victims' feet, and the constantly falling whip, that the captives were exhausted and ready to drop.

But suddenly the lashing ceased and the sound of footfalls behind them died away. Bomba looked around and saw that their tormentor had

disappeared. He had vanished as though the earth had swallowed him up.

Thankful for the brief respite, Bomba and Gibo sank to the ground, panting and gasping.

So wearied were they that it was several minutes before they could speak. Bomba was the first to break the silence.

"The man with the beard is gone," he said.

"It is not a man, but a demon," groaned Gibo. "It is well known to the fathers of my tribe that a demon can take the form of a man. But if he is gone, it is only for a little while. He will come back once more to torture us."

"It may be that he will not," replied Bomba, more to comfort Gibo than from any real conviction in his heart. "He is a crazy man and he may have forgotten us and turned his thought to something else."

But this faint hope was promptly dispelled when again they heard that fiendish peal of laughter and, following the direction of the sound, saw the man with the beard seated on a pile of rock at a little distance in front of them.

The awful mirth persisted until Bomba felt that he himself would go mad if it did not cease. But it subsided at length, and they saw the man take something from the pouch at his side.

"It is something else with which he would tor-

ment us," moaned Gibo. "The whip with the lashes of gold was not enough."

But the man put the instrument to his lips. Then he began to blow a rude tune that, while discordant in places, had a certain crooning melody. The notes rose and fell weirdly, now soft, then rising in a shrill crescendo.

But what gradually stole upon Bomba was that the music was assuming the nature of a call. The man was summoning something, bidding it to come forth.

"Look, master!" cried Gibo, pointing a little distance to the right. "A snake!"

From one of the crevices in the broken pavement a hideous head was rising, that of the jararaca, a poisonous snake of the South American jungle.

"And there is another!" cried Gibo, his voice rising to a scream.

This time it was a boa constrictor, whose huge body was emerging from another of the crevices.

Then, as though moved by a spring, a dozen more heads of snakes emerged from holes in all sections of the temple floor.

"The pets of Ramenez!" cried Bomba.

CHAPTER XIII

SINGING ARROWS

SNAKES of all kinds there were, jararacas, cooanaradis, boa constrictors, anacondas. The temple floor was alive with heads!

Slowly, indolently the bodies of the reptiles followed the heads. Some of them had doubtless been aroused from sleep, but the potent call of the horn was too strong to be resisted. They had heard it before, and it always meant that a feast was spread for them.

"It is the feast of serpents!" screamed Gibo, almost out of his mind with fear. "The fathers of the tribe have told me that strangers were offered to them in sacrifice in this city of evil spirits."

Bomba had already noted a number of skeletons scattered about the place. Now he knew what those skeletons meant.

Were his and Gibo's to be added to the list?

An inspiration came to him.

"Gibo," he said hurriedly, "your hands are bound and so are Bomba's, but Gibo has his teeth.

The machete of Bomba is at his belt. Bend down your head and pull it from its sheath with your teeth. Be quick, if Gibo wishes to live."

Frantic as the Indian was, the peremptory command caused him to pull himself together. He bent over, gripped the hilt of the knife with his strong, white teeth and pulled it from its sheath with a jerk.

"Good!" commended Bomba. "Now hold it tight, Gibo, while Bomba rubs his bonds against the edge of the knife."

The native did as commanded, and Bomba sawed away swiftly at the bond that held his hands. The strands of metal interwoven with them offered the greatest resistance, but the machette had a razor edge and they yielded at last.

The instant they had fallen apart, Bomba plucked the knife from Gibo's teeth and severed the cords that held his feet. Then with a few strokes he freed Gibo also.

It was high time. The indolence of the snakes had vanished when they saw their intended victims, and they were now moving toward them in a writhing mass.

"Quick, Gibo, follow Bomba!" cried the jungle lad, as he made for a high pile of débris that was near at hand.

They scrambled over the rough rocks to the top, fear lending them wings.

The man with the beard had fallen again into one of his paroxysms of frightful laughter as he had seen the snakes, obedient to his call, making for their victims. But the paroxysm ended in a shout of surprise and chagrin as he looked up and saw that his erstwhile captives had freed themselves from their bonds and were seeking a place of refuge.

He made as if he would run toward them, but he could not do this without getting in the very center of the mass of snakes, and he had no intention of suffering himself the fate that he had destined for the strangers.

On the contrary he himself climbed to the peak of a mass of débris, with a fearful look behind him as though to assure himself that a way of escape was still open, if he should be forced to take advantage of it.

Bomba and Gibo were free of their bonds, and that was much. If they died they could at least die fighting. But it seemed after all as though death were only deferred for a very few moments.

For there was no way of retreat open for them. They were hemmed in on every side by the serpents that were hastening toward them. Death seemed certain, either by the bite of the venomous reptiles or by the crushing folds of the boa constrictors or the anacondas.

One of the latter species was the nearest of

their enemies. With hideous head uplifted and its body rolling along behind it, nearly thirty feet in length, it began to make its way up the pile on which Bomba and Gibo were standing.

Bomba slipped his bow from his shoulder, fitted an arrow to the string and let fly. The arrow pierced the throat of the monster, and it fell back floundering and hissing, rolling over and over in the agony of death.

The sight of that enormous body in convulsions seemed for a moment to daunt the other reptiles, and they hesitated in their onward gliding.

Seeing this, the man with the beard picked up his horn and again sent out that compelling note that seemed to have the power of egging the snakes on to their prey.

The man offered a fair target to Bomba, and the lad could easily have sent an arrow to his heart. Had he been an ordinary opponent, Bomba would have done this without any hesitation. But the man was clearly mad, and Bomba felt a reluctance to kill one laboring under that misfortune.

Instead, Bomba picked up a huge stone and hurled it with all his might at the hand that held the horn. The missile sped to its mark and, with a frightful howl, the man dropped the instrument and fell over backward.

With the human enemy put out of the way,

Bomba quickly discharged arrow after arrow into the squirming mass of his reptile foes. Some of them were killed or wounded, but among so many the loss of a few counted for little. Bomba had but few arrows left, and when they were gone death would not be long in coming.

"It is no use, master," groaned Gibo, who had been doing what he could by hurling rocks at the snakes and crushing many of them. "They are too many. They are as many as the leaves of the jungle. Bomba and Gibo have looked their last upon the light of the sun."

In truth, Bomba thought so, too. But just then he caught sight of something that gave him a gleam of hope.

Above his head, almost within reach, depended a number of twisted copper and iron rods that were connected with a part of the temple roof that still remained intact. They had doubtless been used in former times for strengthening the structure. They were covered with rust that offered a chance for the hands to get a firm grip upon them.

"Bomba will lead and Gibo must follow," cried Bomba, as he made a leap upward for one of the rods.

He caught it securely, drew himself up and wound his legs around it.

"Gibo take that one," the lad commanded, indi-

cating one near that to which he was clinging. "Quick!"

The native tried, but he was so demoralized by the fearful plight in which he found himself that, though he touched the rod, he could not get a grip on it and fell back.

"Take hold of Bomba's legs," commanded Bomba, letting himself down.

Gibo did so and was able to scramble up over Bomba's body and reach over and get a firm hold on the adjacent rod.

They began to climb with frantic haste, spurred on by the sight of a huge boa constrictor that had reached the top of the pile. It reared its head to strike, but fell short, its head hitting the rod with such force as almost to shake Bomba's hands loose.

It was a nightmare climb, and more than once Bomba had to reach over and hold Gibo until the latter had recovered his breath and could resume. But at last they reached a set of crossbars, over which they could throw their legs and give themselves a resting spell.

They shuddered as they looked below and saw that writhing, tangled mass of reptiles, which, in their disappointment and rage in having been balked of their prey, had now in many cases turned their fangs against each other.

"The pets of Ramenez are angry," chuckled

Bomba. "They have been cheated. It is not yet time for Bomba and Gibo to go to the place of the dead."

"Bomba is wonderful!" said Gibo humbly. "If it had not been for him, Gibo would have looked his last upon the light of the sun. There is none like Bomba in all the jungle."

"Think you now that the man with the beard is a demon?" asked Bomba. "He is a man, and can be hurt like the rest of us. Else he would not have fallen when Bomba's stone struck his arm."

"It would have been well if the arrow of Bomba had reached his heart," asserted Gibo vindictively, as he put his hand to the torturing welts on his back.

"Bomba would not willingly kill one whose brain has been touched," rejoined Bomba. "But it is well that he was hurt, for his horn was sending the snakes against Bomba and Gibo.

"It may be that he will return now to torment Bomba and Gibo still more," conjectured Gibo doubtfully.

"Bomba does not think so," returned the lad, trying to peer through the dim light to the spot where the man had fallen. "He knows now that our hands and feet are free and he will fear. He saw how the arrows of Bomba went through the neck of the big snake, and he knows how straight Bomba can shoot."

The fall of their tormentor had extinguished the lamp that he carried on his head and that had been their chief source of light. But they were not wholly in darkness, for some faint light glimmered through cracks in the temple roof.

Although safe for the moment from the snakes, their situation was still a desperate one. They did not dare to descend for fear of the reptiles, and to stay in their present position meant eventual starvation or a fall when they should become too weak to cling to their temporary refuge.

Bomba measured with his eye the distance from where they were to the roof of the temple. About the roof ran what appeared to have been once a sort of balcony. Much of it was in ruins, and there were great gaps that would have to be leaped. It was a poor thing to depend on for escape, but anything was better than staying where they were.

"Does Gibo feel strong enough to climb to the roof?" asked Bomba kindly.

"Gibo can do anything now that he knows the man with the beard was not a demon," answered Gibo. "It was the thought that he was an evil spirit that made Gibo as weak as a squaw. But Bomba can lead, and wherever he goes, Gibo will follow. It is good to be with Bomba, for surely he is in the care of the gods."

"Bomba is sure that he will not die until he shall

have had speech with Japazy," returned the jungle lad, to whom his narrow escape had given the conviction that he had been spared with the express purpose of letting him fulfill his errand.

They rested still a few minutes and then began their climb. It was easier, now that the terrible tension had been somewhat relaxed, and in a short time they reached a jutting edge of the shattered balcony.

With great care they drew themselves up on a broad slab of stone, and there they stretched themselves out at full length to rest their tired frames.

But not for long, for Bomba could not know but that at any moment the man with the beard might return with reënforcements. Then, too, they were gnawed by the pangs of hunger. And if ever they needed to keep up their strength, it was now.

With Bomba in the lead, they began their slow progress along the broken balcony of the temple. It had evidently once been a splendid feature of the structure. The floor was of mosaic, inlaid with gold. What fragments of the railing remained were of gold.

Bomba glanced about him and wondered, but he was too engrossed with thoughts of escape to dwell long upon anything else. Again and again they came to places where the least misstep would

have resulted in instant death. Sometimes they had to leap gaps so wide that they heaved sighs of relief when they landed safely on the further side.

At intervals along the balcony there were rooms leading off that had originally, no doubt, been designed for the use of the priests who ministered in the temple. In these were golden ewers and priestly garments, richly gold-embroidered.

They gave little attention to these, however, until, as Bomba glanced in one, he saw signs of recent human habitation. There were the marks of muddy footprints on the floor and pieces of clothing that looked as though they had been worn shortly before and hastily thrown aside.

But what especially attracted Bomba's notice was various foodstuffs that were scattered about. There was part of a roasted pig, some parched corn and farina, and a couple of loaves of the rude native bread.

The famished adventurers pounced on these at once, and it was not until they had eaten to repletion that Bomba hazarded a guess as to the real owner of the viands.

"It is here, Bomba thinks, that the man with the beard ate and slept," the lad conjectured, "for the bread is fresh and the pig has not been long roasted."

"If this is where he dwells, he may be back again," suggested Gibo.

"Let him come," said Bomba. "Bomba fears nothing that lives, once his hands are free."

They ate their fill and stuffed what was left into the pouches at their belts. The satisfying of their hunger had filled them both with new strength, and Gibo emerged from the pall of gloom that had surrounded him since he had entered these subterranean recesses.

Their eyes were on the alert at every step, for where there were so many serpents about there was no telling at what moment they might come across one of the deadly reptiles.

Their ears were strained, too, to catch the slightest sound, and for one sound in particular they listened with especial intentness. It was the hideous laughter of the man with the beard, that fearful cackling that had made their flesh creep in horror.

But some time passed and no sound broke the silence except that of their own footsteps and one other sound—a horrid sound, a stealthy rustling, a slithering, mingled with an occasional hiss, the awful gliding about of the serpents below, that had not yet retired to the holes from which they had been summoned.

As long as those terrible sentries remained on guard there was no chance of descending from the

balcony to the floor of the temple. Yet Bomba kept searching constantly for some means of descent when the moment should seem auspicious.

That there was some such means he felt assured. The man with the beard must have some way of reaching the room that he had made his home. And if there was a way to get up, one could get down in the same way.

A half hour passed without any such way revealing itself, and then a startled exclamation by Gibo brought Bomba to an abrupt halt.

"Look, master!" cried the Indian, in tones of awe and horror. "Look!"

Bomba looked down in the direction of the pointing finger.

There on a mass of débris below lay the still body of the man with the beard. And all over and about his body glided a mass of slimy serpents!

CHAPTER XIV

RETRIBUTION

It was a fearful sight, and Bomba and Gibo gazed at it spellbound.

No longer would that burst of fiendish laughter chill their blood. No longer would those cruel golden lashes fall on their bleeding backs.

The man had died by the very means by which he had meant to inflict a fearful death on others. The reptiles that had come forth at his call had turned on him. They had not been wholly cheated of their quarry.

Even as Bomba and Gibo looked, a great anaconda glided up, and before his monstrous size and truculent bearing the smaller snakes slunk away.

Then the anaconda began to make ready to swallow his prey. One at least of the "pets" of Ramenez was to be fed. And the one who had summoned it forth was to provide the feast.

Bomba and Gibo had looked upon many terrible things in the jungle, but now they turned away with loathing.

"It is the will of the gods," muttered Bomba in a low voice, reverting to his half-belief in the tales he had heard from his earliest childhood. "It is true that the man was mad, but before the gods had stricken him he must have had a wicked and cruel nature. He laughed in glee when the snakes came toward us, and he urged them on with his horn. Now he will blow the horn no more."

Evil as the man was, they could have wished him a less terrible death than the one that he had decreed for them. But nevertheless the removal of their cruel foe brought to them a sense of relief, for the man had not had time to tell others of their presence in the abandoned city. They were free to make their plans and take their precautions without feeling that they were being hunted and that at any moment a hostile force might fall upon them. Once again their quest was largely in their own hands.

But now the faint rays of daylight that had straggled in between crevices of the ruins were beginning to fade, and it was necessary to make some preparations for the night.

To attempt to go forward in the dark in that serpent-infested place would have been simple madness.

"The day fades," said Bomba. "We must get back to the room of the man with the beard be-

fore it is full dark. We can sleep there for the night, and in the morning we will start once more to find Japazy."

They made their way back to the room in question. They noted that the man had contrived a rude door by which the room could be shut off from the rest of the balcony. And when they had shut it tight they knew that their sleep would not be disturbed by any of the crawling denizens of the place. On the morrow the reptiles would be in their holes beneath the temple floor, and with ordinary care the adventurers might hope to get away to a safer place.

But Gibo was very uneasy.

"His spirit will come back in the night," he said. "He will find us here. He will be very angry and he will open the door and blow the horn and the serpents will come crawling in."

"They are foolish words that Gibo speaks," said Bomba. "There are no such things as ghosts. The man is dead. Besides, by this time the anaconda will have swallowed him. And how can he come back again from the body of the big snake?"

"His spirit will tell the snake where we are and the anaconda will be crawling up to see if he speaks the truth," persisted Gibo.

"Then will Bomba send his arrow through the anaconda's neck," returned the lad carelessly.

"Bomba needs sleep and Bomba will have sleep, for there will be much to do to-morrow."

Gibo was silenced if not convinced. Bomba said no more, but stretched himself out upon the floor and in a moment was fast asleep. Slumber was longer in coming to Gibo, who lay there, expecting every moment to hear the demoniac laughter of the man with a beard. But finally he succumbed to the sleep of utter exhaustion.

They were like new men when they woke in the morning after an uninterrupted slumber. The welts on their backs had largely healed, and sleep had proved the best anodyne for their bruised limbs and sore muscles.

"Did the man with the beard come to Gibo in the night?" asked Bomba, with a touch of good-natured sarcasm in his tone.

"No," admitted the native, with a shame-faced grin. "Or, if he did, Gibo was too sound asleep to hear him."

They made a hearty meal and still had something left to thrust into their pouches for future emergencies. Then they opened the door, not without using extreme caution lest any enemy, human or reptile, should be lurking without.

But the corridor was clear, and they made their way to the place where they had witnessed the horrid preparations for the anaconda's feast the night before.

The body of the man had disappeared. The anaconda itself was not visible, having betaken itself to its lair to digest its meal at leisure. Nor could the most careful scrutiny discover any other reptiles on the temple floor.

Bomba and Gibo looked at each other.

"The crawling deaths have gone and there is no one to call them forth again with the horn," said Bomba. "We will go down."

"But how, master?" asked Gibo. "It is too far to drop. Bomba and Gibo will be dashed to pieces."

"We will find some other way," declared Bomba. "We know that the mad man had a way of going up and down. And if a crazed man can do it, why cannot Bomba and Gibo, upon whom the gods have not laid their hands?"

But it was only after a long search that, in a remote part of the gallery, they found a ladder of rope.

"What did Bomba say?" cried the lad exultantly, when he noted the strong strands made of twisted silk that formed the sides and rungs of the ladder. "Now we can go down in safety."

They once more made careful inspection of the floor below to see that it held none of its sinister visitors of the day before. But the place was deserted, and they descended carefully until they found firm footing on the mosaic floor.

Something bright on the ground attracted the attention of Bomba, and, stooping down, he picked up the golden horn that the man had used for such a nefarious purpose. He looked at it curiously.

Gibo shrank from it in fear.

"Put it down, master," he begged. "It is an accursed thing. It will bring us evil fortune."

Bomba had been tempted to keep it, as he thought it might be useful in summoning Gibo, in case they should become separated and not know the whereabouts of the other.

But another thought came to him. Was there something in the queer notes of that horn that appealed especially to reptiles and called them forth from their holes? Bomba knew how susceptible snakes were to music. He cast it from him with a shudder.

They left the temple, and as they proceeded on their way it became evident that the ancient city had not been built on flat land, as there were numerous hills on which had originally been built splendid villas and palaces. It was one of those slopes that they were climbing now, and they were glad, for the further up they went the further away they were getting from the serpents that by preference made their lairs on the lower ground.

They were overwhelmed by the careless profusion with which objects of priceless value were

scattered about. It seemed that there was no limit to the wealth that the city had at one time possessed. Even the commonest utensils of household use were decorated with silver and gold. Jewels of all kinds lay about as numerously almost as though they had been common stones.

"Has Gibo ever heard the name of the abandoned city?" asked Bomba, as they stopped to draw breath.

"The elders of my people say that its name was Ximotox," replied Gibo. "But it is not well even to speak the name of the evil place," he added, as he looked about with a shiver. "It was so wicked that the gods sent the floods to swallow it up. They say that was ten thousand years ago."

"Where did they get so much gold?" asked Bomba curiously.

"They dug it out of the earth," replied Gibo. "The elders say that there were great holes in the ground full of yellow dirt, and that it was tempered with fire by the people until it became as hard as the blade of Bomba's machete. And with it the workmen made all the things that the eyes of Bomba and Gibo look upon. They were wise people, but wicked, and the gods covered the city from the light of day."

Among the other objects that met their view were weapons of great size and strength and cun-

ningly fashioned. There were spears of gleaming steel with golden hilts, and clubs, in the heads of which had been set jagged stones of great hardness and value that gave the weapons a tremendous crushing power.

None of them appealed greatly to Bomba, who was content to rely upon his bow and arrows and his deadly machete, as well as the precious revolver given him by the rubber hunters, Gillis and Dorn, and which had saved his life when the cooanaradi attacked him in the house of Japazy on Jaguar Island.

But Gibo pounced upon them with delight. It had been a sore point with him that Bomba during this expedition had had to do most of the fighting. For, apart from the jungle knife which he had on him when Bomba rescued him from the flood, the native had had no weapons. The knife was good only at close quarters. But here were spears and clubs, in the use of both of which Gibo was skilled.

Jabbering his pleasure, Gibo selected the best spear and most formidable club that he could find and proudly stalked along with Bomba. The latter shared the satisfaction that the Indian felt, for in the unknown dangers that confronted them both spear and club might prove of the utmost service.

Before long they became conscious that the light

was becoming clearer, and at a turning in the difficult path the full light of day burst upon them.

Their delight knew no bounds, for the sight was as unexpected as it was welcome.

When their dazzled eyes grew so used to the light that they could discern objects clearly, they saw that they were in a part of the city that was uncovered. Whether it had escaped the original flood that had engulfed the greater part of the city, or whether it had been excavated later they had no means of knowing.

But it was enough for the present that they were out of the gloom and darkness of the living tomb in which they had been wandering so long, and they filled their lungs with drafts of the fresh air that had never before seemed so sweet and life-giving.

The plateau on which they stood was studded with masses of débris that prevented a long view in any direction.

Then abruptly Bomba threw himself flat upon the ground, dragging the astonished Gibo with him.

He had heard the hum of voices!

CHAPTER XV

THE DEADLY LASH

"LISTEN, Gibo," said Bomba in a low tone, "and tell Bomba what it is that you hear."

There was dead silence for a moment, and then Gibo replied:

"Gibo hears something like the hum of bees as they fly among the flowers."

"Bomba's ears hear more than that," returned the lad. "They hear the sounds of men talking. It is far off, but Bomba is sure of what he says. We must hide somewhere until we can think of what is best to be done."

A little way off was a shelter formed by two overhanging rocks, and to this they wormed their way on hands and knees until they were safe within its shadow.

Bomba's heart was beating fast. He seemed at last to have reached the goal of his adventure. There were human beings not far off in this city of the gold towers and he felt sure that they were under the command of the man he had come so far to seek, Japazy, the half-breed.

But his experiences with the man with the beard had still further increased Bomba's natural caution. He had a feeling that the man had been posted as a sentinel by Japazy to keep out intruders. Perhaps the fellow had been chosen for that purpose because of his ruthless and cruel nature. He was mad, to be sure, but for that very reason Japazy might have depended on him to do things from which a normal nature might have shrunk.

It is true that the man had disclaimed knowledge of Japazy, although the name had seemed to strike some familiar chord. But that might have been in accordance with Japazy's orders or the pretended ignorance might have been simply the cunning of a madman.

In any event, it was clear that Japazy had especial reasons for keeping all intruders away from the abandoned city.

So Bomba had every reason to expect a harsh reception from the present master of the place. That reception might very easily take the form of torture or death or both.

Not that these considerations made Bomba falter in his purpose. His mind was made up. He would see Japazy. The only thing he pondered was the best way of accomplishing his purpose.

Should he approach the half-breed as a suppliant? Or should he endeavor to get possession

of the person of Japazy and extort from him by force what he might not be willing to yield to entreaty?

Before he could decide this question he needed further information, and this, with his usual quick decision, he determined to get at once.

"Bomba thinks he is near the camp of Japazy," the lad said to Gibo. "If this is so, the journey of Bomba is near its end. Bomba is going to see what he can find out about the camp. Will Gibo go with him, or would he rather stay here until Bomba comes back?"

"Gibo will go with Bomba," returned the Indian. "He has his spear and his club and he may be able to help. But if he should have to die, he would rather die with Bomba than live without him."

"Gibo has a good heart," replied Bomba, profoundly touched by his companion's devotion. "He shall go with Bomba and we will meet good or evil fortune together. But we must move as silently and carefully as the puma of the jungle."

At some distance in front of them the plateau seemed to end at the brink of a precipice. Bomba had little doubt that below it was a valley, from which came the sounds that he had heard.

But if they moved toward this, they would not be under cover, and at any moment a head might

appear above the brink and discover their presence.

At the right of where the adventurers were lying was a massive pile of ruins that, from its size, might formerly have been a palace. If they could reach this without detection, they might from its upper part be able to look down into the valley while they themselves were sheltered behind the blocks of masonry.

With the utmost caution and still on hands and knees, they made their way in that direction, taking advantage of every bit of cover afforded by rocks and underbrush.

It was slow work, but at last they found themselves among the ruins of the palace, and here, safe from detection, drew themselves to their feet with a sigh of relief.

They scrambled from one pile of masonry to another until they had reached the highest point of the mass, and there, taking shelter behind two massive blocks that screened them thoroughly, looked down into the valley.

Bomba's conjecture had been right. Before them stretched an encampment consisting of thirty or more native huts. In the center was a house of greater pretensions, and this, Bomba instinctively sensed, was the dwelling of Japazy.

The scene that stretched before them was one of great activity. Men were moving hither and

thither, engaged apparently in tying up bales of cloth or making crates for statues and other objects that had been gathered into groups. Everywhere the bright sun reflected back the gleaming yellow tints that showed the prevalence of gold among the articles that were being packed.

On a little platform, shaded by an awning, sat a man who seemed to be directing affairs. He was of great size and his gestures were quick and imperious. They were too far off to discern his features clearly, but Bomba had no doubt that this was Japazy.

Japazy! The man whose name for months had been in his thoughts! The man who alone of all the millions of the earth perhaps held the secret of Bomba's birth! The man who had known his father and mother—perhaps had killed them!

At the last thought Bomba's eyes blazed and his hand instinctively sought the hilt of his machete.

Gibo, too, had been watching the scene with breathless interest. That interest was deepened by the fact that among the workers he recognized many of his old acquaintances and friends of Jaguar Island. He wondered whether they knew that that island had been wiped out of existence.

While they were gazing upon the scene with varying emotions a sudden excitement was visible among the workers.

In handling one of the statues, the man who

was holding the upper part either slipped or found the weight too heavy for him. Whatever the cause, he dropped it and the head was shattered.

Instantly there was wild commotion. The hapless man obeyed an impulse to flee. But the figure under the awning leaped to his feet and shouted orders to the workers.

In obedience to these the man was pursued, captured and brought back into the presence of the tyrant.

The rage of the latter was betrayed by his fierce ejaculations and furious gestures. The man who had incurred his wrath groveled on the ground before him in an ecstasy of fear. The despot spurned him with his foot and gave some short, sharp commands.

The wretched man was pulled to his feet and dragged to a stake at a little distance. There he was securely tied so that he could move neither hand nor foot.

"What are they about to do?" asked Bomba, whose heart was torn with pity for the unfortunate fellow.

"Gibo knows not," replied Gibo in a strained voice.

They were not long kept in doubt. At a word from the tyrant a gigantic man stepped forth from the throng, armed with a scourge, the thongs of which were intertwisted with bits of metal.

His arm rose and fell and the thongs bit into the victim's flesh. There was a terrible shriek that pierced the ears of the unseen lookers-on and at the same time pierced their hearts.

Again and again the blows were repeated and the shrieks of agony followed each blow.

The man on the platform had settled back comfortably in his chair and was evidently viewing the proceedings with great relish. Each shriek seemed to fall on his ears like a note of music.

"Surely he will not kill him," murmured Bomba in anguish.

"Surely he will kill him," returned Gibo grimly. "Japazy rejoices in giving pain. He revels in blood. May the curse of all the gods rest upon him!"

The shrieks grew fainter and fainter and at last ceased altogether. The man's head fell over limp. He had lost consciousness. But ever that long, powerful arm kept rising and falling with horrid regularity until at last the signal was given to stop.

But it was a matter of indifference to the victim then whether the executioner kept on or not. He was dead!

The ropes that had bound him were untied and the body fell with a thud to the earth. At a word from the tyrant, a shallow hole was dug and the body thrust into it. Dirt was hastily shoveled

over it and then the men resumed their work, more active and careful than ever now, lest they, too, come under the terrible wrath of Japazy.

Bomba looked at Gibo and saw that the latter's eyes were full of tears. It was an unusual thing, for the natives of the jungle were stolid and seldom betrayed their emotions.

"Gibo knew the man," blubbered the native. "He was Shimazu, a friend of Gibo's. His father's hut was not far from mine, and Gibo and he played together when they were boys."

Bomba respected the Indian's emotion and kept silent. His own heart seethed with hate for the monster, and he resolved that for every stroke of that scourge Japazy should pay heavily.

"Gibo has one thing to ask of Bomba," said the Indian.

"What is that Gibo would have" asked Bomba.

"It is that Bomba will let Gibo deal with Japazy if ever he comes in the power of Bomba," replied the man, looking gloatingly at his keen spear and heavy club.

"It may be so," replied Bomba grimly; "but Bomba cannot promise. If Bomba find that Japazy has killed his father or mother, he must have Japazy for his own to deal with as he will. Bomba must pay his debts and have his vengeance."

The awful scene they had witnessed had given

Bomba much cause for thought. The appalling cruelty of the man had come to him as a shock, ruthless as he had known him to be.

If he should go to Japazy, as he had at first intended, and put himself in the half-breed's power, what was likely to be the outcome? What chance was there that the half-breed would answer his questions, harmless as they were? How much more likely it was that all the malignity of his nature would be vented upon the youth who now possessed the secret of the city with the towers of gold, a secret that Japazy alone of the whites or partly whites knew. How simple a solution of the problem it would be for Japazy to treat Bomba as he had just treated the hapless worker!

His mind was soon made up.

"Bomba has not believed in demons, but this Japazy is a demon in the form of a man," he said slowly. "We will not trust Japazy. We will get him in our power and force from him the knowledge that Bomba has come to seek."

Gibo looked at him in stupefaction.

CHAPTER XVI

A DARING PROJECT

"THEY are brave words that Bomba speaks," ventured Gibo humbly, "and Gibo knows that Bomba fears nothing that lives. But there are some things that cannot be done. How can two prevail over fifty?"

"Bomba does not know yet," admitted the jungle lad. "But there were fifty jaguars that came at night to the camp of the rubber hunters, and Bomba made them flee. It was not because Bomba was stronger than the fifty jaguars, but he was wiser. There are times when wisdom is more than strength.

"But Japazy is guarded by evil spirits," said Gibo fearfully. "He speaks to them and they do his bidding. They guard him when he wakes and when he sleeps."

"Those are idle words for children," retorted Bomba impatiently. "It is Japazy that tells such things to the foolish people, so that they may fear him and do his will. Japazy can feel the sting of an arrow and the bite of a knife. And he will

feel them, unless he does the bidding of Bomba."

The lad looked down into the valley, carefully noting the best way of getting there from where they were and giving especial attention to the location of Japazy's house.

"Bomba and Gibo will wait here till the sun goes out of the sky," he said at length. "Then they will creep down into the valley and make their way to the house of Japazy. He will be asleep, but Bomba and Gibo will have no sleep in their eyes. Their eyes will be bright and their acts will be swift. They will bind Japazy and make him talk. Then they will see what it is best that they should do next."

The audacity of the plan fairly took away the Indian's breath.

"It would be safer to go into the lair of the anaconda," he muttered.

"It is not for safe things that Bomba has come through the jungle," answered the lad. "If the brain thinks quickly enough and the arm strikes hard enough, there are many things that can be done. But it is time now that we eat, for to-night there will be much work for Bomba and Gibo to do."

They had enough left of the roast pig and farina to make a hearty meal, and they ate with zest.

"Now it will be well if Gibo sleeps," counseled Bomba, when they had finished eating.

"Will not the master sleep, too?" asked Gibo.

"No," returned the lad. "Bomba will keep watch. And while he watches he will think."

There was abundant reason for thinking, if his project was to prove a success. Yet, hazardous as it was, Bomba knew that he had at least a fighting chance.

In the dark they could with ordinary care be easily mistaken for members of the camping party and not attract any special notice. It would probably not be hard to reach the dwelling of Japazy.

There was the chance, of course, of finding the house guarded by sentries. In that case they must fell or silence the guards in some way. Bomba trusted to his jungle craft and his catlike quickness for that. In case there were no sentries and the tyrant simply relied on the terror of his name the task would be easier.

Drenched with sleep, perhaps heavy with the liquor brewed in the jungle, Japazy might be bound and made helpless before he fairly knew what had happened. Then Bomba would have the talk with him that he had been yearning for for so long.

There was the chance, of course, that, even though a captive, Japazy might stubbornly refuse to speak. But Bomba did not dwell seriously on

that possibility. He knew that he could find ways to make the half-breed talk.

It was a daring project and fraught with countless perils. The slightest slip might destroy the scheme and involve him and Gibo in ruin. But the situation was desperate, and after the awful scene of the day Bomba had definitely abandoned getting any knowledge because of friendliness or good nature of the half-breed. Force was the only thing that promised any results.

So when Gibo awoke from a long sleep he found Bomba fully resolved on his course of action.

"There will be no moon to-night, Gibo," Bomba told his companion, "and that is well, for to-night the darkness will be the best friend of Bomba and Gibo."

"Then the master is going to the house of Japazy?" asked Gibo.

"Gibo has spoken truly," returned Bomba.

"No man has braved Japazy to his face and lived," warned Gibo.

"A boy will face him to-night," was the calm reply. "Whether he lives or dies, time will tell. Bomba has spoken, and he does not eat his words."

There was such determination in his voice that Gibo kept silent. But from that moment he regarded himself as one doomed to death. He had the utmost admiration for Bomba's strength and

courage. He was even willing to admit that the boy might win through, even in a combat with the dreaded Japazy. But what could any one, however brave and daring, do against the evil spirits that watched over the destiny of that arch-scoundrel?

"Now," said Bomba, as he yawned and stretched himself, "the sun is still high in the heavens and it will be many hours before we can go into the valley. Gibo will watch and Bomba will sleep, for he will need all his strength when darkness comes."

He threw himself down on a slab of stone and in a moment was sleeping as soundly as though he had not a care in the world.

It was dark when he awoke.

"Has any one come near while Bomba slept," he asked, as he opened his eyes.

"No one, master," replied the faithful Indian. "The men in the valley worked till it was dark and then went to their huts. Japazy, too, has gone to his house, and men went with him carrying baskets of food and jars of liquor."

Bomba looked out over the valley. There were little glints of light here and there that betrayed the location of the huts. But there was none of the chatter and merriment, the singing and playing upon rude instruments that were common to native villages after the day's work was done.

A pall of gloom rested over the place. And Bomba did not wonder, after what he had seen.

Not one of the hapless workers there knew that on the morrow he might not share the fate of Shimazu. They were mere beasts of burden, worked until they dropped by their cruel and greedy tyrant, intent only upon heaping up riches for himself.

There were many lights, however, in the house of Japazy. And Bomba was glad of that, for it made the place stand out like a beacon. There would be no trouble even in the dark in finding the place where the half-breed dwelt.

Several hours passed and one by one the lights in the huts were extinguished until the whole valley with the exception of Japazy's house was shrouded in blackness. And even in that there was light coming only from a single window.

Bomba touched Gibo's arm.

"The time has come," he said.

CHAPTER XVII

TAKEN BY SURPRISE

At Bomba's touch, Gibo rose, took his spear in one hand and his heavy club in the other and followed his leader without a word.

During that long day of waiting both Bomba and Gibo had had ample time to study every feature of the landscape in front of them and determine upon the road to the encampment that offered the fewest difficulties. They had in their mind every mass of débris, every tree, every cluster of bushes, so that now, though the darkness was so great that they could scarcely see ten feet ahead of them, they moved with surprising ease and celerity.

Fortunately, there were no dogs in the village, whose barking might have awakened the weary sleepers. Nevertheless, they exercised the utmost caution when they came to the outermost fringe of huts. They might have been shadows drifting along, for all the noise they made. They felt for every step, lest some cracking twig might betray their presence.

The single light in the house of Japazy was their guide. In a little while they had come within a hundred feet of the house. There they crouched low behind a mass of underbrush and made a careful study of the surroundings, as far as the faint glimmer that filtered through the window permitted.

The house, though more pretentious than the huts of the encampment, was yet a flimsy structure, put up hastily for the temporary occupancy of the half-breed during his visits to the abandoned city. It had none of the spaciousness and solidity that had marked Japazy's house on Jaguar Island.

The living quarters seemed to consist of a single story, though a rise in the upper part seemed to suggest an attic or storeroom. A high flight of stairs led to a covered veranda, on which the front door of the house opened.

The window was about eight feet above the ground, and was covered only with a netting, designed to keep out mosquitoes and other insect pests of the jungle.

For fully ten minutes Bomba and Gibo crouched in the thicket, straining their eyes to see any human figure on the outside of the house and their ears to hear any sound of footsteps or of conversation between sentries.

Their nostrils, too, almost as keen as those of

the animals, sniffed the air to detect a human presence.

But none of their senses revealed anything to cause them alarm. Japazy had not dreamed of the possibility of any intruders coming from the outside world, and as for his own followers, he depended upon the terror of his name to keep them subdued and tractable. Not one of them would have dared to come unbidden to the house that they believed to be guarded by ghosts and demons.

Silent as phantoms, Bomba and Gibo rose from their shelter and approached the dwelling.

"Gibo will bend his back so that Bomba may stand upon it and look through the window," directed Bomba in a whisper.

The Indian nodded his acquiescence, though his teeth were chattering.

Having arrived beneath the window, Bomba mounted on the bent back of Gibo and, with infinite precaution, raised his head above the sill and peered into the room.

A quick glance assured him that there was no one in the room except a man who lay stretched out on a richly decorated couch with his face toward the window. He was sleeping heavily, for which Bomba was grateful.

By the dim light that came from a wick floating in oil that was contained in a golden lamp, Bomba

had a fair view of the face of the man whom he had come so far to seek.

The face was dark and bearded. The eyes were set far back beneath jutting brows. The features were deeply lined and evil. The face looked as though it might be the playground of a host of wicked passions. The jaw was brutal and resolute, and went far to explain the hold the half-breed had been able to maintain over the ignorant and superstitious people whom he had so long ruled with a rod of iron.

The face was flushed, due no doubt to deep indulgence in liquor, of which a great bowl, half full, stood at the side of the couch in easy reach of the sleeper's hand.

Bomba leaped from Gibo's back to the ground as lightly as a feather.

"He sleeps," whispered Bomba in the ear of the Indian. "He has been delivered into our hands. Come!"

As stealthily as panthers, they made their way to the front of the house and crept up on the veranda. They had feared that the door might be locked, but it yielded to the touch.

Before entering the house, Bomba took from his pouch a long and strong rope that he had woven that day from strands found in one of the ruined rooms of the palace. He and Gibo had tested it by pulling on it with all their might, and Bomba

was satisfied that it would stand the strain he intended to impose upon it.

They stole through a corridor until they reached the sleeper's room.

The man had not stirred from the position he was in when Bomba had seen him through the window. He lay upon his back with his arms extended at his sides.

Following the plan that had been already determined upon, Bomba and Gibo took their stands on opposite sides of the bed. Softly, they passed the rope over the sleeper's chest above the arms and drew the rope under the couch. Three times they did this until a three-fold band encompassed the chest of the half-breed.

Then they drew the rope tight with a sudden jerk and knotted it strongly.

The pressure woke the man on the instant. He opened his eyes, saw the ominous figures on either side of the couch, and tried to leap upward. The rope held him like a band of steel.

Bomba's knife was at his throat and Bomba's voice was speaking:

"One sound and Japazy dies!"

CHAPTER XVIII

JAPAZY SPEAKS

THE icy chill of the tone and the touch of the knife on his throat proved sufficient.

The half-breed sank back on his pillow and stared at the lad who had spoken. If hate could kill, the malignity in the man's eyes would have blasted Bomba on the spot.

"Gibo," said Bomba, "raise your spear, and if Japazy lifts his voice to call for help, send it through his body."

Gibo did as directed, and Bomba restored his knife to his belt. Then he drew a chair to the side of the bed and sat down, his eyes never for an instant leaving those of the half-breed.

Hate still glared in Japazy's eyes, but now a puzzled look was added. He studied the lad's face intently.

"Bartow or Bartow's ghost!" he murmured.

"It was that which Jojasta said," said Bomba. "It was that which Sobrinini said. But Bomba is not Bartow and he is not Bartow's ghost. He is a boy of the jungle who has come to ask Japazy about his father and his mother. He wants to

know who they are and where they are. Japazy knows and he must tell."

While Bomba was speaking, the half-breed had regained some of his self-possession. A crafty look came into his eyes.

"It is not well that the jungle boy should come in such fashion to have talk with Japazy," he said, in a silky tone that was at strange variance with his fierce appearance. "Why did he not come with palms outward in sign of peace? Japazy would have been glad to welcome him and make a great feast for him. For the heart of Japazy is good and he is kind to strangers."

"It was in that way that Bomba went to Japazy's house on Jaguar Island," returned the lad.

"Jaguar Island!" interrupted the half-breed surprisedly. "Did Bomba go there?"

"Yes," replied the jungle boy. "But Japazy was not there, and his people tried to kill Bomba."

"It was bad of them to do that," said Japazy. "Japazy will punish them when he goes back to the island."

"Japazy will not go back to Jaguar Island," returned Bomba.

A look of apprehension came into the crafty eyes.

"Does that mean that Bomba will kill Japazy?" he asked. "It is not well to kill one who has never done Bomba harm."

"Bomba will not kill Japazy, if Japazy tells Bomba what he wants to know," the boy replied. "It was not that that Bomba had in mind when he said that Japazy would not go back to the island. Tamura spoke. The island has sunk in the great river. The waters have covered it, and all the people are drowned except Gibo," and he pointed to the native, who stood with spear poised and ready.

The expression on the half-breed's face at the news that Bomba brought him was fearful to behold. It was evident that he had not heard of the fate of the island. His eyes flashed fire, he gnashed his teeth and fairly foamed at the mouth.

"Gone! Gone!" he cried, with a howl that he quickly muffled as Gibo made a menacing motion with the spear. "My treasure! My gold! My jewels! Gone! Gone!"

He dug his nails into the palms of his hands till the blood came.

Not a word of regret for the people who had been drowned! All his care was for his treasure.

Bomba waited till the man's emotion had somewhat spent itself before he spoke. Under other circumstances, he might have been moved to pity by the shattering of the half-breed's hopes. But he remembered the hideous cruelty that afternoon of which he had been an eye-witness and felt that

the tyrant was only getting a fraction of the suffering that he deserved.

"Jaguar Island is gone," said Bomba, "but Japazy is here. And Japazy is the only one who can answer the questions that Bomba has come to ask."

"He is not the only one," returned the half-breed sullenly. "Why does not Bomba ask Casson? For Casson knows. And Jojasta of the Moving Mountain knows. And so does Sobrinini, the witch."

"Bomba has spoken to all of whom Japazy speaks," replied the lad. "The door of Casson's mind is closed, and it does not open when he wills. Jojasta died while Bomba was speaking to him. And the hands of the gods have been laid on Sobrinini, so that her thoughts are like wild things and she speaks foolish words."

"Japazy would tell if he could," replied the half-breed, after surveying the lad craftily through half-shut eyes. "But it was so long ago that Japazy does not remember. It is all like a dream that is past to Japazy."

Bomba took out his knife, and the point of it pricked the man's throat.

The half-breed shrank back as far as his bonds permitted him, and terror came into his eyes.

"Japazy will try to remember," he said. "But it was long ago and he must get his thoughts to-

gether. But he will tell, if he can, what Bomba wishes to know."

"It is well," said Bomba. "But the knife will stay near Japazy's throat while he thinks. It is not good to make Bomba angry or to think that he can be deceived with cunning words. He looks into the heart of Japazy and sees that it is black. He hears the words of Japazy and he knows that his tongue is forked. It is not well to play with Bomba. Ramenez could tell Japazy that, if he were here."

"What of Ramenez?" asked Japazy.

"He is in the stomach of the anaconda," replied Bomba. "He sought to kill Bomba and Gibo and feed them to the snakes. But Bomba felled him with a blow and the anaconda swallowed him."

The look of fear in the half-breed's eyes deepened. This was only a boy who sat beside him, but no man he had ever met had been capable of sending such terror to his heart. Not for many years had he met one who did not cringe before him.

"Bomba is strong, and Japazy likes those who are strong," said Japazy placatingly. "He would be a friend to Bomba, even though Bomba comes upon him in the night and binds him with ropes when he is heavy with sleep."

"Bomba does not seek Japazy's friendship,"

said the lad dryly. "And yet he does not seek Japazy's death. If Japazy will tell him the truth, Bomba will spare Japazy's life."

"Japazy will tell Bomba the truth," promised the half-breed. "What is it that Bomba would know?"

"The name of his father," answered the lad.

"It is Bartow," replied the half-breed.

Bomba's heart leaped at this confirmation of the belief that he had long cherished.

"And the name of his mother?" he asked eagerly.

"It is Laura," was the reply.

"Is this Bomba's mother?" asked the lad, drawing the picture of the lovely woman from beneath the puma skin that stretched across his chest.

The smoldering fire in the half-breed's eyes leaped into flame when he saw the portrait. Demoniac passion was in his look as he glared at it.

He opened his mouth to speak. But the words were not spoken.

At that moment Bomba felt a stunning blow on the head. Then he knew no more!

CHAPTER XIX

A DESPERATE SITUATION

AFTER what seemed an eternity of unconsciousness but was really only a few minutes, Bomba opened his eyes. But for a time they were unseeing eyes, for everything swam before his sight.

His head ached. His brain was reeling. He was like one awaking from a nightmare, conscious that something terrible had come to him in his dream, but unable to remember what it was.

He tried to put his hand to his throbbing head, and then discovered that both of his hands were tightly bound together. His feet, also, were tied. The cords in both instances had been drawn so tight that they bit cruelly into his flesh.

Where was he? What had happened?

Then his eyes, clearing somewhat, caught a glimpse of the half-breed, no longer lying on the couch a prisoner, but standing, fully dressed, and conversing with a group of his followers at the other end of the room.

Then Bomba remembered!

He recalled that he had just shown the picture

of the lovely woman to Japazy when the stunning blow had come that had sent him to the floor.

He rolled over a little on his side, and saw the form of the faithful Gibo lying beside him. Whether he was alive or dead Bomba did not know, but from the fact that the man was tied up as tightly as he was himself he conjectured that Gibo still lived.

The half-breed at that moment turned his glance toward Bomba, and the latter closed his eyes. He thought it was best to feign unconsciousness until he could think over the situation and form some plan of action.

The half-breed came over to where the lad was lying, accompanied by the gigantic native who had served as executioner the day before. They stood for a moment regarding the motionless body of Bomba, and then Japazy gave the lad a vicious kick that required all of Bomba's fortitude to bear without flinching.

"It was a heavy blow that Solani gave him with his club," observed the half-breed. "Japazy is glad that it did not kill him. It would be too bad to have him die such an easy death."

The native bent down and put his hand on Bomba's breast.

"His heart still beats strongly, master," Solani said, as he rose again to his feet. "He will live to give much sport to Japazy."

"And that is well," returned the half-breed, rubbing his hands in glee. "We shall yet hear his screams and see him writhe. We shall hear him pray to the gods for death. See how strong he is, Solani! Look at the muscles of his arms and his legs! He will be a long time in dying."

Solani drew back his lips in a ferocious grin that showed fangs like those of a wolf.

"Solani knows many ways of making a man die slowly," he said gloatingly. "He can make him die inch by inch."

"That is good," laughed Japazy, and there was a deadliness in the laugh that made the flesh of the jungle boy creep. "We will make a great festival, and he shall be tortured where all men can see. He will learn what it means to dare the frown of Japazy."

"Japazy is like a god," said the big native fawningly. "Lightning shoots from his eyes. May his wrath never fall upon Solani."

"Solani has deserved well of Japazy, and Japazy will not forget," replied the half-breed. "But now call your men and have these dogs put in the dungeon where Solani keeps his prisoners. See that they have plenty to eat and drink, for I would have them strong when the time comes for them to die. But see that they do not escape, for if they do, Solani shall die in their place."

"Solani will keep them safe," promised the executioner.

He called to the group of men near the door and gave them some orders. They picked up the bodies of Bomba and Gibo and carried them out of the door, down the steps, and for some little distance until they came to the mouth of a cave.

Here one of the men lighted a torch and preceded the others, who bore their captives some distance into the cavern, which eventually broadened out into a room of considerable size.

There they put the bodies on the floor and withdrew.

Bomba listened while the echoes of their steps died away. At the entrance of the cavern he could hear the harsh menacing voice of Solani, and knew that he was giving directions to the sentries who were to be left on watch. Then all was silence.

Bomba's head had fully cleared by this time, and he was wholly awake to the horrors of his condition.

The tables had been turned in a twinkling. At one moment he had seemed complete master of the situation. The half-breed had been in his power. Now Bomba was a captive, and of what awaited him he scarcely dared think.

He had heard enough to know that fiendish tortures were preparing for him and that Japazy

and Solani would outdo each other in devising horrors beyond the power of speech.

So this was the end of the high hopes with which he had set out from the maloca of Hondura! All the more bitter was the blighting of those hopes at the very moment when they had seemed on the verge of being realized.

For Japazy had already told him the names of his father and mother, and, with Gibo's spear ready to be launched at his body if he faltered, seemed ready to give up the rest of the information Bomba craved.

Now he would never know it, he said bitterly to himself. As Bomba, the jungle boy, he had lived. As Bomba, the jungle boy, he would die.

But would he die? The indomitable spirit of the lad asserted itself over his temporary fit of depression. He was still alive. He was Bomba the jungle boy who had never been afraid to match his wits and strength against anything that breathed. He had faced the puma, the jaguar, the rattlesnake, the alligator, the anaconda, and come off victor. He had braved Nascanora, the fierce leader of the headhunters, and shamed him before his bucks. Was he going to quail before this half-breed, this mongrel, murderous and cruel though he was? Never! Never!

"I am Bomba!" he cried. "I am white! My soul is stronger than any native or half-breed of

the jungle. I have once seen Japazy cringe before me. I will see him cringe again."

How he was going to make these brave words good he did not know at the moment. But from that moment he banished despair and set his active mind to work on a plan of escape from his desperate situation.

The challenge that he had uttered to fate had penetrated the ears of Gibo, now awaking to consciousness.

"It is Bomba's voice," muttered the Indian, still half in stupor.

"Yes, it is Bomba," replied the lad, delighted beyond measure at hearing his faithful follower's words, for he had feared that he would never hear him speak again. "Bomba was afraid that Gibo had gone to the place of the dead"

"This place is strange," murmured Gibo. "Where is it that Gibo is with Bomba?"

"In the prison of Japazy," answered the jungle boy. "His men came upon us while we were unaware and struck us down."

"They were not men, they were demons," replied Gibo. "That is why we did not hear them come. It would have been well if Bomba had listened to the voice of Gibo when he told him that Japazy was guarded by evil spirits."

"Gibo's words are foolish," replied Bomba. "They were not demons, but the men of Japazy

that struck us with clubs. Bomba heard them talking about it when he was lying with his eyes closed in the house of Japazy."

"And what will Japazy do now with Bomba and Gibo?"

Bomba did not care to tell his companion of the horrible tortures with which they were threatened.

"Who can tell what Japazy will do?" he answered, as lightly as he could.

"Japazy is terrible when he is angry," said Gibo. "And he will not forgive Bomba and Gibo for having tied him to his bed and put the knife to his throat and pointed the spear at his heart. He is even now thinking how he can make Bomba and Gibo die so that they will be a long time in dying. And he will lick his lips when he hears them scream."

"He will never hear Bomba scream," declared the lad proudly. "Let the heart of Gibo not fail him. When the pumas climbed the tree did they get Gibo? When the big snake wound his coils about him did it crush Gibo? The gods are with those whose hearts are good. Bomba's arms are still strong—"

"But they are bound," interrupted the man despondently.

"Were they not bound when Ramenez drove us

on with lashes?" demanded Bomba. "Yet Ramenez is dead, and Bomba and Gibo are alive."

"But then Bomba had the arrows that sang and the knife that bit," responded Gibo, who was evidently in the lowest depths of depression.

"It was not with the arrow nor the knife that Bomba felled Ramenez," answered the lad. "He found a stone at his hand, and he used it. He will find again what may be needed. Now it is well that Gibo should sleep, for Bomba must think."

Think he did in the hours that followed. But for a long time he cudgeled his brain in vain. His mind seemed like a squirrel in its cage, forever moving but getting nowhere.

"The arrows that sang and the knife that bit!"

He had made light of the lack of weapons when he was trying to cheer up his companion. But in his heart he felt the weight of Gibo's argument.

With his trusty weapons in his hands he could have faced an army, and, even though the odds were hopeless, could have gone down fighting gallantly.

But the crafty half-breed had stripped both him and Gibo of their arms. For a moment Bomba had the wild hope that his machete, concealed as it was beneath his puma skin, might have escaped the half-breed's eyes. But as he pressed his bound hands to his chest he could feel that the knife was no longer there.

He strained against his bonds with all the strength of his powerful muscles. But they did not give an inch. His captors had done their work well under the fierce and watchful eyes of Japazy.

Bound hand and foot! With not a soul from whom he could expect the slightest help except his companion, bound and as helpless as himself! Condemned to horrid tortures at which his flesh shuddered though his soul refused to flinch! What situation could have seemed more utterly hopeless?

Yet, despite this outlook, Bomba kept on thinking—thinking!

He was still thinking when the daylight came. He knew this, not by any light that penetrated into that remote recess of the cave, but by the sounds of the awakening jungle and the conversation of men outside.

And just then a thought came to Bomba—a thought that made his heart leap with hope. Those long hours had not been fruitless after all!

He bent eagerly toward the sleeping Indian.

"Gibo!" he called softly.

CHAPTER XX

IN THE DUNGEON

"YES, master," came from the native, waking on the instant at the sound of Bomba's voice.

"Listen, Gibo," said the jungle boy in the same restrained tone. "A thought has come to Bomba while Gibo has been sleeping. Bomba has good words to speak to Gibo. He has—"

But there the lad was interrupted by the sound of feet hurrying along the passageway, and in a moment two of Japazy's henchmen came in sight, bearing breakfast for the prisoners.

One of the men had brought a torch that faintly illumined the gloom, and as Gibo looked up into the dark faces he gave a grunt of recognition that was echoed by them.

They were old acquaintances of Gibo who had been brought away from Jaguar Island by Japazy on this latest visit of his to the treasure trove of the abandoned city.

"Arima and Melota!" exclaimed Gibo. "It is long since Gibo has looked upon the faces of his friends."

"Arima is glad to see Gibo," responded one of them. "But he is also sad, for he will not look upon the face of Gibo much longer. For Gibo is under the wrath of Japazy and Gibo must die."

It was a blunt statement, after the manner of the people of the jungle, who usually go straight to the point in matters of that kind. It shocked Gibo, though it only confirmed what he had come to look upon as certain.

"Gibo must have been mad to point his spear at the heart of Japazy," put in the one who had been addressed as Melota. "He might as well go into the cave of the jaguar with bare hands and try to take away her cubs."

"What Gibo has done he has done," returned Gibo with resignation. "If he must die, it is the will of the gods. But he would not go to the place of the dead without knowing whether it was man or demon that struck him last night in the house of Japazy."

"It was the arm of a man that struck the blow," replied Arima. "Solani's club struck down this stranger, and the club of Antor fell upon the head of Gibo."

"How did they know that Gibo and his master were in the house of Japazy?" asked Gibo. Not even the imminence of death could subdue his curiosity.

"Japazy had sent men to bring food from

Jaguar Island," put in Melota. "They came back at midnight with the news that Jaguar Island had been swallowed by the waters. They came first to the house of Solani with the bad news. Solani feared the wrath of the master when he should hear the bad news. He did not want to wake him. But then he feared that Japazy would be still more angry if he should not be told at once of all that had happened.

"So they came to the house of Japazy," Arima took up the story. "They heard the voices of men in anger. Solani looked in the window and saw Japazy bound and the boy with the knife and Gibo with the spear. They crept in, as the puma walks softly through the jungle, and the clubs of Solani and Antor fell on the heads of the strange boy and Gibo."

The simple narrative dispelled the mystery that had puzzled Bomba, and he silently berated himself for not having stationed Gibo outside the house as a guard, once Japazy had been bound. His own knife would have been sufficient to keep the half-breed in subjection.

But he did not indulge in vain regrets. All his thought was concentrated on the present and the future.

These men were friendly enough to Gibo. Was it possible to stir them to revolt against Japazy? In their hearts they must hate the tyrant.

Bomba spoke for the first time.

"Arima and Melota say that Gibo must die," he said. "Has Japazy also said that Bomba must die?"

"He would make Bomba die many times if he could," replied Arima. "His mouth is white with foam when he speaks of Bomba."

"Bomba does not fear Japazy, nor does he fear death," replied the lad. "Death comes quickly to men whom Japazy rules. Ramenez is dead. Shimazu died yesterday under the lash of Solani. To-day or to-morrow Arima and Melota may die."

The men shivered and looked at each other uneasily.

"But if Japazy were dead," went on Bomba, "Arima and Melota might live to be old men and have their grandchildren playing in their cottages. And they would have much gold and live at ease. Why should not Japazy die, so that Arima and Melota and all the men that sweat and groan under Japazy may live?"

The Indians shrank from the jungle boy as though the thought were blasphemy.

"It is not well to listen to such words!" exclaimed Arima in a low voice. "The demons and evil spirits that guard Japazy will hear them and whisper them into the ears of Japazy and his

wrath will fall on us. Come, Melota, let us be gone!"

They gathered up the jars and dishes they had brought in and hurried down the passage as though already pursued by the demons they feared.

The arrow that Bomba had drawn at a venture had missed its mark. It was evident that there was nothing to be hoped for from Japazy's slaves. Again Bomba had to recognize the ingenuity with which the half-breed had been able to hold these ignorant people in thrall by playing on their superstitious fears.

Gibo began a monotonous chant that Bomba recognized as a native prayer for the dying. The Indian had evidently given up all hope and was bidding farewell to life.

It grated on Bomba's nerves.

"Is it a squaw that Bomba hears?" the boy demanded contemptuously. "Or is it the wailing of a little child? Bomba thought that Gibo was a man."

"We are the same as dead," responded the native listlessly. "Bomba and Gibo will see the sun to-day for the last time."

"We shall see the sun on many days if Gibo will do as Bomba says," returned the lad. "Did not Bomba tell Gibo that a good thought came to

him in the night? Listen now and listen well. Bomba—"

But here again he was interrupted by sounds from without. This time the sounds were more portentous. There was a stir and the tread of many feet approaching the cave, mingled with the barbaric beat of a tom-tom.

"Japazy is coming," whispered Bomba, rightly interpreting the sounds.

The native seemed to shrink within himself with fear.

"Where Japazy comes death comes," he moaned.

"Keep silent," commanded the lad. "Let not Japazy see that Gibo fears. Bomba will find words to speak to Japazy."

The sound of the tom-tom ceased at the door of the cave. Then came the tread of heavy feet down the passage.

Three men, headed by the gigantic executioner, entered the dungeon. Two were bearing torches, which, at a sign from their leader, they put in holders on the wall.

Close behind them came Japazy, the arch-fiend of the abandoned city.

CHAPTER XXI

WORDS OF DOOM

THE half-breed was richly robed—decked out with all the regalia that had been wont to awe his subjects—and he was evidently in high spirits. A demoniac smile rested on his evil features, a smile that was more terrible than a frown would have been on another's face.

Bomba could see Japazy fairly lick his lips in satisfaction as his gaze rested on his captives. Gibo turned his eyes away, but Bomba's eyes gave back stare for stare.

Japazy turned and ordered his followers, with the exception of Solani, to leave the cave.

"Solani may stay," he said. "He can look at the stranger and plan what he will do with him when Japazy has delivered him into his hands."

The executioner smiled, and the smile was as cruel and terrible as Japazy's own.

"Solani is glad that the club did not kill," he said, as he viewed the prisoners gloatingly. "This man," pointing contemptuously to the Indian, "will die too soon. He is not strong enough to

bear what Solani will do to him. But the boy is strong and will take a long time to die. Solani will make him scream. Solani will make him dance. Solani will make him writhe. The boy will pray to the gods for death, but death will be long in coming. Japazy will be pleased with the work that Solani will do."

Bomba looked at the man coldly.

"Solani is a coward," he said. "If Bomba had his hands free, he would make Solani cry like a squaw."

The look that came into the executioner's eyes was dreadful to see.

"The stranger speaks bold words," he snarled. "He will speak no more when Solani has torn his tongue from his mouth with red-hot tongs."

"It will be well to start with that," suggested Japazy, "so that his words may not stir up the people. But before he loses his tongue Japazy would talk with him. He has come a long way to have speech with Japazy. And now, Solani, you may go and stand without the cave, for what Japazy has to say to the boy must be heard by him alone. The slave here," giving a contemptuous look at Gibo, "does not matter, since he is so soon to die."

The executioner made a low obeisance and withdrew, not without a last malignant glance at the lad who had defied him so boldly.

"So Bomba has come through the jungle to have speech with Japazy," said the half-breed in a jeering tone. "Now Bomba can have his will, for Japazy is here."

The impulse was strong in Bomba to answer taunt with taunt. But his reason counseled against this. Even if he were about to die, he felt the urge to learn the secret of his birth.

"Japazy has already answered two of Bomba's questions," said the lad in an even tone. "He has said that Bartow is Bomba's father and that Laura is his mother. There are other questions that Bomba would ask. Where are his father and mother? Are they still alive?"

Japazy's eyes became like glowing coals.

"No," he said. "Japazy killed them both. And now he is going to kill the son."

Frantic rage surged through Bomba's veins at this cold-blooded declaration. If his hands had been free, that moment might have been Japazy's last.

But might not the half-breed be telling an untruth? There was something in his eyes that gave Bomba that impression.

"Why did Japazy slay the father and mother of Bomba?" he asked.

"Because Japazy hated them," snarled the half-breed. "Because they did a great wrong to Japazy and his people, and he swore to take his

vengeance. And he took it on Bomba's father and mother. But what Japazy did to them is little compared to what he is going to do to Bomba. If he had known that Bomba was alive, he would have hunted him out before this, so that his vengeance might be complete."

"Casson and Sobrinini and Jojasta did not say that Bomba's father and mother were dead," said Bomba, eying the half-breed narrowly.

"Casson and Sobrinini are fools! If Japazy had them here, they should die with Bomba."

"Why should Japazy kill Casson and Sobrinini?" Bomba asked.

"Because they knew too much," was the reply. "Their brains are twisted now, but the time may come when they will remember, and they may tell things that will bring harm to Japazy. Japazy would send them all to the place of the dead, for the dead do not speak."

"Where were Bomba's father and mother when Japazy killed them?" asked the boy. "In the jungle, or in the far country on the other side of the sea?"

"Japazy is weary of answering the questions of Bomba," responded the half-breed, "and he will tell him only this thing more. If Bomba lived he might be great among the white people, for his father and mother had much gold and many friends. But now Bomba is nothing, and he al-

ways will be nothing, for Japazy has said that he must die."

"Japazy has said many things," replied Bomba coolly. "It may be that Bomba will not die."

"Does Bomba think that Japazy will change his mind?" sneered Japazy. "If he thinks that, he is a bigger fool than Casson or Sobrinini. Bomba shall die before two days are passed. It would not be well to kill him at once, for Japazy wants Bomba to have time to sit here and have his flesh creep as he thinks of what Japazy and Solani are going to do to him. It will be sweet to Japazy to know that Bomba is thinking of such things. Then, too, Japazy wants to feed Bomba well for two days, so that he shall be strong and not die too soon. For Japazy wants to laugh a long time while he watches Solani make Bomba dance and twist and scream."

"Then Japazy will not laugh," retorted Bomba. "It will be Bomba who laughs at Japazy and Solani while they are trying to torture him. Japazy may tear Bomba's body, but he cannot touch Bomba's soul. Bomba will not shrink like a coward, as Japazy did when he felt the sting of Bomba's knife at his throat."

The taunt went home. The eyes of Japazy shot fire and he gnashed his teeth.

"Bomba speaks big words!" he cried. "But they are only words, and for every one of them,

Solani's knife and red-hot irons will go deeper into Bomba's flesh. But it is not well that I waste time with a fool. But," and he dropped again into his sneering tone, "Bomba cannot say that Japazy did not answer the questions that Bomba has come so far to ask."

"Japazy has answered," admitted Bomba. "But Bomba thinks that Japazy's tongue is forked and that he lied when he said that he had killed Bomba's father and mother."

The half-breed whipped a knife from his belt and for a moment it seemed that he would plunge it into Bomba's heart. But by a great effort he restrained himself.

"Bomba is trying to anger Japazy," he muttered, restoring the knife to his belt, "so that Japazy may kill him quickly and he will not have to suffer the tortures of Solani. But Japazy is wise and will not be cheated of his vengeance."

He gave the boy a vicious kick and started down the passage.

CHAPTER XXII

THE GNAWING TEETH

GIBO, who had listened to the conversation in an agony of fear, turned to Bomba.

"The master is mad," he said dolefully.

"Why does Gibo think that Bomba is mad?" asked the youth.

"Because he made lightnings shoot from the eyes of Japazy," responded the Indian. "Why did not Bomba speak softly to Japazy and try to turn away his wrath? Bomba is strong and can do great things when his hands are not bound and he has his knife and arrows ready. But what can he do now, when he is tied as the hunters tie the wild pig of the jungle when they carry it home to to their village?"

"Has Gibo sharp teeth?" asked the lad, with seeming irrelevance.

"Yes," replied the native in wonderment. "But it is not with Gibo's teeth that Japazy can be slain."

"No. But with those teeth Bomba can be freed," was the calm reply. "Listen well, Gibo,

to the words that Bomba speaks. We are bound with cords and the cords are strong. Japazy has taken away our knives so that we cannot cut the cords. But he has not taken away our teeth, and the teeth of Gibo can sever Bomba's bonds."

A gleam of hope came into the Indian's face.

"Gibo will do it now!" he exclaimed, as he bent eagerly over Bomba's shackled hands.

"No, not now," returned the lad, drawing away. "It is two days before Japazy will try to torture and kill Bomba and Gibo. That is why Bomba made Japazy angry, so that he would talk and tell us when he would kill us. We will leave the cords as they are, for Solani or some of his men may come to look at them and see that they are still strong. But when the sentries are placed for the night and they think that we are asleep, then shall the teeth of Gibo bite at the cords on Bomba's hands until they fall apart. After that Bomba will untie his feet and then free the hands and feet of Gibo."

"Great is Bomba!" exclaimed the native in exultation. "The gods have put wise thoughts into his mind. Bomba and Gibo may yet look on the light of the sun."

"Did not Bomba say that it was foolish for Gibo to chant the death song?" asked the lad.

"But," objected the Indian, as another thought came to sober him, "even if the hands and feet of

Bomba and Gibo be free, they have no weapons."

"We will take them from the guards at the mouth of the cave," said Bomba coolly.

"But they may be many, and they will be watchful because of the fear of Japazy," muttered Gibo dubiously.

"There were many snakes that sought to kill us, but we drove them off," replied Bomba.

"Let Bomba lead. Gibo will follow," said Gibo submissively.

"And now, Gibo," said the lad, as he yawned, "Bomba is tired, for he has watched all night. He would sleep now, so that he may be strong when the night comes. Gibo will wake Bomba when the food comes, for perhaps Arima or Melota may say some word that will tell us how many will be on watch at the mouth of the cave."

Gibo promised, and Bomba threw himself down at full length and was almost instantly asleep.

In the middle of the day Arima and Melota came in with a plentiful supply of food. They still looked frightened from the shock that Bomba's bold words had given them that morning, and were disinclined for further conversation. But, evidently in compliance with orders, they made a most careful examination of the captives' bonds, which they found to be perfectly tight and secure.

"It is good of Arima and Melota to bring such

good food to Bomba and Gibo," said the jungle boy, whom Gibo, in accordance with his promise, had awakened. "And there is much food, too, enough for all the men that watch in front of the cave, as well as for Bomba and Gibo."

"The three who watch have other food," replied Arima. "Japazy has ordered that Bomba and Gibo be given all the food that they can eat, so that they may be strong when the great festival is made and the men gather together to see them die. There will be much food for the men on that day, and there will be no work."

It was a grisly subject and Bomba did not pursue it further, but applied himself to the food. He had learned from the native's admission what he wanted to know. Three men watched in front of the cave!

Bomba finished his meal and again lost himself in sleep, to be awakened only at dark by the coming of his supper, which proved to be a meal quite as ample and satisfactory as that of midday.

Now Bomba, strengthened by food and rested by sleep, was himself again, keen, alert, indomitable.

To make assurance doubly sure, they waited till Bomba felt sure the cave was silenced for the night.

"Now, Gibo," said the lad, turning to the na-

tive, "let Bomba see if Gibo has boasted idly of the sharpness of his teeth."

Gibo showed all those teeth in a smile and set to work.

It was an arduous task, for the cords were strong and thick. Again and again Gibo was forced to stop and rest, for he felt that his jaws were getting paralyzed. But the fear of death and the hope of life proved powerful spurs, and at last he had so chewed and torn the strands that a strong jerk of Bomba's arms pulled the last shreds apart.

The exultation of Bomba could not be expressed in words as he felt that his hands were free. But they were cramped and weak from their long confinement, and he had to rub them and swing them about until the blood once more flowed freely through them.

Then his strong fingers busied themselves with the cords about Gibo, reënforced at times by his own sharp teeth, until they, too, yielded to his efforts.

With the arms of both free, it was a minor matter to untie their feet. But it was a full hour after this had been accomplished before they felt they had full mastery of their limbs.

"Now, Gibo," whispered Bomba, "listen well to what Bomba says, for on what we do will depend whether we are again free men or whether

we have to face the tortures of Japazy and Solani. There will be no other chance, for if we are captured now we will never be out of their sight again until we die. Is Gibo listening well?"

"Gibo is listening, master," was the eager response.

"We must be as silent as the shadows that creep across the face of the moon," went on Bomba. "Bomba will go first and Gibo will follow. When we get near the mouth of the cave, Bomba's eyes will search for the men who stand on watch. What his eyes show him will tell Bomba what is best to be done. And what he tells Gibo to do Gibo must do as quickly as the jaguar leaps. Does Gibo understand?"

"Yes, master," whispered the Indian.

"Come, then," commanded Bomba.

Flat on their stomachs, they wormed their way toward the entrance of the cave.

The corridor was long, with many windings, and they moved so slowly, inch by inch, that it was some time before a draft of fresh air warned them that they were nearing the entrance.

They paused and listened. A faint murmur of voices came to them from without the cave.

CHAPTER XXIII

A SUDDEN LEAP

More slowly now than ever, Bomba covered the few feet that still remained between him and the entrance to the cave.

Hugging the wall closely, he peered out into the open.

There was no moon, and the darkness was intense. The only glimmer of light was that which came from a little fire that had been built at a distance of perhaps fifty feet in front of the cave.

Before this, two men were squatting, warming a kettle of some savory compound that came to the nostrils of Bomba, perhaps some soup left over from their supper earlier in the evening.

Bomba searched for the third sentry. His eyes detected him at last as a little darker blot on the blackness, standing about five feet before the entrance to the cave and a little to one side. Bomba could make out that he was leaning on his long spear, the point of which was resting on the ground.

Bomba drew back a little way and reflected.

Then he bent and whispered in the ear of Gibo:

"Bomba will leap on the man with the spear and bear him to the ground. He will try to do this without noise. As Bomba leaps, Gibo will grasp the man's spear, so that it will not fall and alarm the others. We will not kill if we can help it, for these men are but the slaves of Japazy and do his bidding."

"But if the man fights hard and be too strong for Bomba, what shall Gibo do?" whispered the native.

"Strike him on the head with the spear," directed Bomba. "But Bomba's hands will be on his throat, and he will soon know no more. Then we will drag him into the cave and bind him with the tough creepers of the trees. Then will we deal with the others."

"If the others hear and come running?" asked Gibo.

"Then we will fight them," said Bomba, "Gibo with the spear and Bomba with the knife that his eyes beheld at this man's belt. And when he have struck them down we will vanish in the darkness. They will not know the way we take, and cannot follow until the sun shall rise, and by that time Bomba and Gibo will be far away."

It was a desperate project, but with a fair degree of good fortune it promised success. Bomba and Gibo would have the advantage of the sur-

prise and of knowing just what they were trying to do.

"Is Gibo ready?" asked Bomba.

"Ready, master," replied the native.

The two glided to the mouth of the cave. Fortune had favored them somewhat in the interval, for the men at the fire had gone a little further away into the brushwood to gather fuel for their waning fire.

The third sentry had not changed his position. So immobile was he, in fact, that Bomba suspected that he was sleeping on his feet, his elbow supported by the butt of his spear.

Bomba carefully measured the distance. His muscles tensed. Then he launched himself like a jaguar upon the unsuspecting native.

His fingers fastened about the man's throat, stifling the cry of alarm and fright that rose from the fellow, and they went to the ground together with Bomba on top.

At the instant of Bomba's spring Gibo leaped forward and grabbed the spear before it fell to the ground. Then he circled round the combatants, seeking a chance to get in a blow if needed.

But it was not needed. The force with which the native had come to earth had partially stunned him, and Bomba soon choked him into utter unconsciousness.

As soon as the body turned limp Bomba re-

leased his clasp, as he had no desire to kill the man, as he could easily have done.

So deftly had Bomba worked that the attention of the two comrades of the fallen man had not been attracted.

"Quick, Gibo!" panted Bomba in a whisper. "Let us draw this man inside the cave. Take his knife and cut some creepers, and we will bind him tight. And we will tie a band of leaves across his mouth, so that he cannot shout when he comes back to life."

Gibo obeyed, and in a trice the sentinel lay, bound and helpless, a few feet inside the cave.

Now a great part of Bomba's problem had been solved. They were free and armed, Gibo with the spear and Bomba with the knife. In addition Bomba had found a knotted club, part of the sentry's equipment, that had been placed against the outer wall of the cave.

The jungle beckoned them. The darkness offered its protection. It would have been an easy matter to slip off in the shadows without offering battle to the remaining sentries.

But Bomba wanted a longer start than this would give them. Probably the men at the fire would come to rejoin their companion in a few minutes. They would discover his plight and at once give the alarm. Then there would be a hue

and a cry, and all of Japazy's men would be after them like a pack of wolves.

No, it was better to close the mouths of the other sentries as completely as they had that of their comrade.

"We will creep up upon them as they bend over the fire," directed Bomba in a whisper. "Bomba will take the big man on the right. Gibo will take the other. Strike hard enough to stun and fell, but do not kill."

The underbrush was thick, and with the darkness aiding, the jungle boy and his faithful follower crept as closely as they dared, stopping just outside the feeble zone of light cast by the fire.

The men had brought back the fuel they had gathered, and were bending over to coax a flame from the embers.

Bomba watched till he thought the opportune moment had come. Then he nudged Gibo and they leaped from hiding.

Three great bounds carried them to the fire. The sentries turned with a shout of alarm, as they saw the figures that seemed to have come from nowhere, and straightened up. But before they could use their weapons the club of Bomba and the butt of Gibo's spear came down with force upon their heads. They staggered and fell motionless.

It was the work of but a few minutes to truss

them up and gag them as they had their companion. Then they dragged the bodies some distance away and stamped out the fire so as to make the darkness more complete.

"It is done!" exclaimed Bomba exultantly, as he possessed himself of the bows and arrows of his enemies. "Japazy will not laugh now when the day comes for the festival. And Solani, too, will be sad because he cannot use his knives and his red-hot tongs on the bodies of Bomba and Gibo."

But they had little time for jubilation. They were still in the direst peril, in the very heart of the enemy's country, in a district strange to them, while their foes knew every foot of it.

But Bomba had the woodsman's sense of direction, and to this he trusted. Now, too, although the moon was still below the horizon, the stars were out, and they had more than once proved unerring guides to Bomba during his nights in the jungle.

"Come, Gibo!" the lad cried, and plunged into the night.

CHAPTER XXIV

TERROR

BOMBA headed for the ruined palace from which he and Gibo had made their way to the house of Japazy. During the long day they had hidden there he had carefully noted every detail of his surroundings, and now he saw them all in his mind as clearly as though he were bending over a map.

Once there, he figured that he would go directly to the passage through the rocks that led from the ruined temple where the snakes dwelt. It would be an eerie journey, but he counted on the probability that the reptiles would be sleeping beneath the mosaic floor. In any event, they were less terrible foes than Japazy and Solani.

There were many fallen trees in the way, about which they had to make detours. On one occasion, Bomba skirted the head of a great tree which Gibo went round by way of the roots. The tree was long, and for the moment they were separated by perhaps a hundred feet.

As Bomba came to the other side he was startled at hearing the sound of a furious strug-

gle. And as he looked in the direction of the sound he saw in the dim starlight two figures locked in mortal combat.

One of them he knew was Gibo. And the other! There was no mistaking the gigantic form that did not have its match in the camp of Japazy!

It was Solani, the executioner!

Even as Bomba recognized him the smaller figure was hurled to the ground and the other towered over him with his spear upraised.

"Fool, who thinks to run away from Solani!" snarled the giant. "Now shall Solani's spear point find the fool's heart."

There was not time enough for Bomba to get to the man before he should give the fatal thrust.

But Bomba was accustomed to act light lightning.

He grasped his knife by the blade and hurled it toward the menacing figure. The knife whizzed through the air and buried itself in the giant's throat.

There was a horrid, strangled cry, and Solani pitched forward on his face, dead almost before he struck the ground.

Bomba hurried forward and helped Gibo to his feet.

"Master, master!" cried the native, kissing the lad's hand in adoration. "Once more has Bomba saved Gibo's life!"

"It is well," replied the lad, as he retrieved his knife and thrust it in his belt. "Solani was a dog that deserved to die, and now Shimazu is avenged. But Bomba wishes it had been Japazy in Solani's place."

They were conscious now of something strange in the air. It had grown stifling and hot and smelled of sulphur. The trees were swaying oddly. For some reason they found it difficult to keep their feet.

"The earth is trembling as though it were drunken," muttered Gibo uneasily. "Perhaps the demons that guard Japazy are getting ready to come forth and hold us so that we cannot escape."

"The words of Gibo are foolish," retorted Bomba sharply, though he himself was much disturbed.

Just then there was a sound as of a thousand cannon. The earth lifted beneath their feet with such force that they were flung a dozen yards. Great trees were uprooted and fell in thunderous crashes. The ground was rent in a score of places. All nature was in the throes of a tremendous convulsion.

Battered and bruised in body, their minds in a wild tumult, Bomba and Gibo struggled to their feet and staggered on, their only thought to get somewhere in the open where their lives would not be menaced by the falling trees.

Again and again they were thrown on their faces. Once the earth opened directly at their feet, and they had to leap back quickly to avoid being engulfed.

Now there rose from behind them other sounds, the beating of tom-toms to placate the gods, the crash of falling houses, the wild screams of men in mortal terror. Lights flashed from the houses of the encampment and from torches in the hands of people in flight.

Through the trees they could catch glimpses of dark forms, fleeing they knew not where to escape the wrath of the earthquake. Some of them passed within a dozen feet, without paying the slightest attention to the escaped prisoners. Every other thought was swallowed up in fear for their own personal safety.

Now other factors were added to the mad stampede. Jaguars and pumas came rushing through the jungle, trampling down the brushwood, sometimes jostling the fugitives. But there was no danger of attack from them. Their ferocious instincts were in abeyance. Once Bomba nearly stepped on the folds of a great anaconda that was gliding on its way to safety. But there was no more malignity in the monster now than in a garter snake.

It was a fearful display of the power of the uuchained forces of nature. But terrible though

it was and though Bomba knew that at any moment he might be swallowed up by the earth or crushed by a falling tree, he had a queer feeling of exultation.

For now there was no danger of pursuit from Japazy or his men. They had probably forgotten all about their prisoners. And even if they thought of them, they would dismiss the thought at once and devote all their efforts toward their own personal safety.

There was no longer any effort on Bomba's part to reach the ruined palace. There could be no more dangerous place than that at the present time, with great masses of masonry dislodged and falling as the earth shook.

So he abandoned himself to chance, simply seeking to get as far away from Japazy's camp as possible and into the open places beyond the abandoned city.

They toiled on for hours, at every moment in danger of their lives, and just as the dawn was breaking they found themselves on a mountain road that skirted the brink of a precipice.

From time to time they came across scattered fugitives, some of them bearing what they could carry of their household goods, others perfectly content to flee bare-handed, so long as they could save their lives.

At a turn in the winding of the mountain road,

they saw before them a powerful figure that somehow seemed familiar. The man carried on his back a bundle of considerable size and bound compactly.

The hurrying figure was some distance in front of them, but the heavy bundle hampered him, and in a few minutes Bomba and Gibo had drawn near enough to see him more distinctly.

The man had not turned and they could only guess at the face, but now they knew the form!

A steely glint came into Bomba's eyes as he turned toward Gibo.

"It is Japazy!" he exclaimed in a low tense voice. "Now is there joy in Bomba's heart, for he will meet his enemy face to face."

He leaped forward like a panther, tore the pack from the man's back, caught him by the collar and whirled him about.

There was a snarl of rage as the man staggered back against the rocky wall of the mountain. Then his face went ashen as he looked into Bomba's blazing eyes.

CHAPTER XXV

OVER THE WATERFALL

"WHY does not Japazy laugh?" demanded Bomba with bitter contempt, as he saw the fear deepen in the half-breed's eyes. "He could laugh when he stood over Bomba bound, and he said that he would laugh when Solani should make Bomba dance and scream and writhe. Why does he not laugh now?"

The half-breed tried his best to pull himself together.

"Japazy was but jesting when he spoke those words to Bomba," he mumbled. "He would not have killed him nor would he have permitted Solani to torture him. He wanted to see whether Bomba had a brave soul or whether he would tremble before Japazy's words."

"Japazy lies," replied Bomba. "He boasted that he had killed Bomba's father and that he was also going to kill Bartow's son. Now Bartow's son is here. Why does not Japazy, the brave Japazy, kill him?"

"Japazy does not want to kill Bomba," mut-

tered the half-breed, his face a yellowish-green from fear.

"He wants, but he does not dare," replied Bomba. "Japazy is cowardly. His legs are shaking now as he faces Bomba. Is this the Japazy that shot lightning from his eyes? He could be brave with his people about him to do his bidding. Now he is trembling like a leaf."

It was true. Japazy was an arrant coward at heart, and now he shook as if with an ague and his face was pale.

Bomba drew his knife.

The half-breed shrank back against the wall.

"Bomba would not kill Japazy?" he muttered thickly.

"Bomba is not a murderer," responded the lad, with infinite scorn. "He leaves that to cowards like Japazy. But he would fight Japazy face to face."

"Let Gibo kill him, master," begged Gibo, as he raised his spear. "Japazy killed Shimazu with the lash, and Shimazu was Gibo's friend. Let Gibo's spear pierce Japazy's black heart."

"Put down your spear, Gibo," commanded Bomba. "Japazy must fight with Bomba."

"Japazy has no knife," whimpered the half-breed.

"Give him your knife, Gibo," directed Bomba.

The native reluctantly drew his knife from its

sheath and was about to hand it over when the half-breed, as desperate as a cornered rat, leaped at Bomba, hoping to catch him off his guard and hurl him over the precipice at his back.

Quick as a flash, Bomba dodged aside. The force of Japazy's leap carried him to the very brink of the cliff. He made a desperate effort to draw back, tottered for a moment on the edge, and then, with a hideous scream, fell to his death, hundreds of feet below.

Bomba and Gibo looked at each other, shaken despite themselves at the suddenness of the tragedy.

"It was the will of the gods," murmured Gibo in an awed voice.

"It was time that he went to the place of the dead," returned Bomba. "His heart was evil and he has shed much blood. And if, as he says, he killed the father and mother of Bomba, their deaths are now avenged."

They picked up the bundle that Japazy had been carrying. It was heavy and, knowing how mad the man had been for wealth, they conjectured that it must contain things of much value.

Gibo slung it over his shoulder and they went on. But now they went in peace, for their deadliest enemy was forever deprived of the power to do them harm.

The tremors of the earth still continued, but

the worst of the convulsion seemed to be past. But they were abruptly reminded of the danger in which they still stood when suddenly a rent appeared in the earth before them and Gibo fell into the pit before he could save himself.

"Help, master!" he cried despairingly as he fell.

Instantly Bomba was kneeling at the edge of the crack and extending a helping hand. The crack narrowed lower down, and Gibo's head was still above the edge.

Then the crack began to close again, threatening to crush Gibo as between the tips of giant nippers.

"Quick, master, quick!" screamed Gibo, as he felt the grip of the earth on his foot.

Bomba put forth all the strength of his muscles and with one tremendous yank jerked the Indian clear. A moment later the earth's edges came together over the spot where Gibo had been.

They had hoped that the path they were traveling would bring them out beyond the abandoned city and into the open jungle. But now the road bent downward, and, to their consternation, ended in the temple where Ramenez had met his death.

There was no help for it. They must go once more through that terrible place and find the passage that led to the waterfall. Beyond the cataract lay safety.

With infinite precaution, they made their way over the mosaic pavement, on the alert for any hideous head they might see protruding through the floor. But they saw none. There was no weird horn now to call them forth to their mission of destruction.

Before long the fugitives were in the remembered passage and could hear the tinkle of the cascade.

There it was, the green, beautiful, sparkling veil of water, beyond which lay safety.

"Will Gibo follow Bomba through the waterfall?" asked Bomba, turning to his companion.

"Gibo will follow, even though it leads to death," was the reply.

Bomba drew a long breath and leaped into the cataract!

There was a terrible beating of water about his head, thunderous noises in his ears, an awful sensation of falling, and then the jungle boy found himself tossed about like a chip on the seething waters below.

Blinded, half-suffocated, he sought to keep his head above water, while he was carried by the force of the current to the quieter waters below. Then he struck out for the shore, reached it, and drew himself up on the bank.

He shook the water from his eyes and looked about for his companion. He saw a black head

bobbing along like a cork only a little distance away, and in a moment more Gibo was standing beside him on the bank.

They rested for a few minutes and then climbed to the plateau from which they had first beheld the waterfall. They were tired, almost exhausted, but their hearts were singing.

At last they were free, free from the terrors of the abandoned city, free from the power of Japazy. Before them stretched the jungle, the jungle that they knew and loved. Dangers there were in plenty still to be faced, but they were dangers that they knew and could meet. Their bodies were free! Their souls were free!

Gibo thanked the gods of the jungle. Bomba thanked the God of the white man, of Whom he knew so little but yearned to know more.

As they rested, Bomba's eyes fell upon the bundle that Japazy had been carrying, and his curiosity awoke.

He untied the knots that bound it, and his eyes were dazzled by the dancing lights that flashed from the precious stones that rolled and tumbled about him. Rubies were there and diamonds and emeralds and topazes and sapphires, dozens of them of almost incalculable value.

Bomba handled them with delight in their beauty. He knew vaguely that in the land of Gillis and Dorn, of Frank Parkhurst and his

golden-haired mother they represented wealth. In the jungle they were worth nothing. A piece of meat when hungry might be more precious.

But from what he had heard from the Parkhursts and the rubber hunters, he knew that the whites would value them highly. And he was white. Some time he might be restored to his white heritage. He resolved to guard them carefully.

His eye was caught by a little oblong volume in the midst of the pile. He drew it forth curiously. It had a leather cover and many paper leaves. And on the leaves was writing, strange characters that he had never seen before.

Bomba had seen Casson write and had often studied the script curiously, though he himself could read and write but little. His literary education, barely commenced, had ceased abruptly when Casson had met with the accident to his head. Bomba knew the English printed letters and could read if the text were simple enough. But of handwriting he knew nothing.

He did, though, know its purpose. Casson was wont to write things down on paper so that he could remember them and read them over again at some later time. So the person, whoever it was, that had written the pages before him had set down something that he wanted to remember.

Who was that person? Who could it be other than Japazy?

And if it was Japazy, might not there be something here written down that would tell him of his parents, who they were, where they lived—all the things that Bomba longed to know?

His heart leaped at the thought, and he clasped the book convulsively to his breast. Perhaps, then, his mission had not been in vain. The half-breed's tongue was forever stilled. But these tracings of his pen had been left behind.

Bomba could not read them. Casson could read them. Sobrinini could read them. And if they, perchance, were dead, he would search out other whites who would read them for him.

Jewels! The precious stones that gleamed and flashed about him! They were as nothing to Bomba compared with that precious book.

With the revival of hope all the yearnings that had tugged at his heart sprang into glorious life. He leapt to his feet and waved the book about his head exultingly.

"Bomba is white!" he cried. "He will not forever live in the jungle. He will yet dwell among his own people beyond the sea. For Bomba is white!"

The Indian looked at him wonderingly, as though he thought the lad had taken leave of his senses.

"Come, Gibo," cried the jungle boy, "we must hasten. Gather up the treasures of Japazy and tie them in the pack. But this thing," waving the book, "Bomba will carry close to his heart. Hurry! We must find Casson. We must find Sobrinini. We must find some one who is white. For Bomba is white and his heart yearns for his own people. Hurry, Gibo, hurry!"

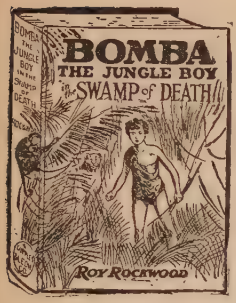
Then Bomba and Gibo struck off through the jungle toward the village of Hondura.

THE END

THE BOMBA BOOKS

By ROY ROCKWOOD

12mo. Cloth. Illustrated. With colored jacket.



Price 50 cents per volume.
Postage 10 cents additional.

Bomba lived far back in the jungles of the Amazon with a half-demented naturalist who told the lad nothing of his past. The jungle boy was a lover of birds, and hunted animals with a bow and arrow and his trusty machete. He had a primitive education in some things, and his daring adventures will be followed with breathless interest by thousands.

1. BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY
2. BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY AT THE MOVING MOUNTAIN
3. BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY AT THE GIANT CATARACT
4. BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY ON JAGUAR ISLAND
5. BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY IN THE ABANDONED CITY
6. BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY ON TERROR TRAIL
7. BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY IN THE SWAMP OF DEATH
8. BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY AMONG THE SLAVES
9. BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY ON THE UNDERGROUND RIVER
10. BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY AND THE LOST EXPLORERS
11. BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY IN A STRANGE LAND
12. BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY AMONG THE PYGMIES

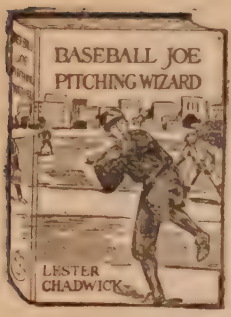
Send for Our Free Illustrated Catalogue.

CUPPLES & LEON COMPANY, Publishers New York

THE BASEBALL JOE SERIES

By LESTER CHADWICK

12mo. Illustrated. Price 50 cents per volume.
Postage 10 cents additional.

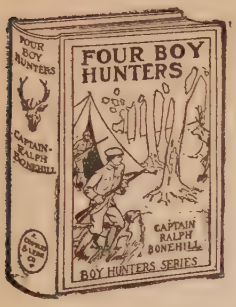


1. **BASEBALL JOE OF THE SILVER STARS**
   or The Rivals of Riverside
2. **BASEBALL JOE ON THE SCHOOL NINE**
   or Pitching for the Blue Banner
3. **BASEBALL JOE AT YALE**
   or Pitching for the College Championship
4. **BASEBALL JOE IN THE CENTRAL LEAGUE**
   or Making Good as a Professional Pitcher
5. **BASEBALL JOE IN THE BIG LEAGUE**
   or A Young Pitcher's Hardest Struggles
6. **BASEBALL JOE ON THE GIANTS**
   or Making Good as a Twirler in the Metropolis
7. **BASEBALL JOE IN THE WORLD SERIES**
   or Pitching for the Championship
8. **BASEBALL JOE AROUND THE WORLD**
   or Pitching on a Grand Tour
9. **BASEBALL JOE: HOME RUN KING**
   or The Greatest Pitcher and Batter on Record
10. **BASEBALL JOE SAVING THE LEAGUE**
    or Breaking Up a Great Conspiracy
11. **BASEBALL JOE CAPTAIN OF THE TEAM**
    or Bitter Struggles on the Diamond
12. **BASEBALL JOE CHAMPION OF THE LEAGUE**
    or The Record that was Worth While
13. **BASEBALL JOE CLUB OWNER**
    or Putting the Home Town on the Map
14. **BASEBALL JOE PITCHING WIZARD**
    or Triumphs Off and On the Diamond

Send for Our Free Illustrated Catalogue.

CUPPLES & LEON COMPANY, Publishers **New York**

THE BOY HUNTERS SERIES



By CAPTAIN RALPH BONEHILL

12mo. Illustrated. Jacket in full colors. Price 50 cents per volume. Postage 10 cents additional.

Captain Ralph Bonehill is one of the best known and most popular writers for young people. In this series he shows, as no other writer can, the joy, glory and happiness of outdoor life.

FOUR BOY HUNTERS
or The Outing of the Gun Club

A fine, breezy story of the woods and waters, of adventures in search of game, and of great times around the campfire, told in Captain Bonehill's best style. In the book are given full directions for camping out.

GUNS AND SNOWSHOES
or The Winter Outing of the Young Hunters

In this volume the young hunters leave home for a winter outing on the shores of a small lake. They hunt and trap to their hearts' content and have adventures in plenty, all calculated to make boys "sit up and take notice." A good healthy book; one with the odor of the pine forests and the glare of the welcome campfire in every chapter.

YOUNG HUNTERS OF THE LAKE
or Out with Rod and Gun

Another tale of woods and waters, with some strong hunting scenes and a good deal of mystery. The three volumes make a splendid outdoor series.

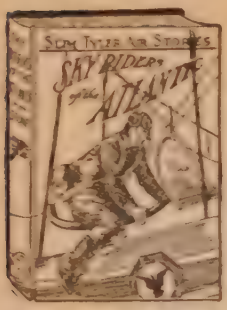
OUT WITH GUN AND CAMERA
or The Boy Hunters in the Mountains

Takes up the new fad of photographing wild animals as well as shooting them. An escaped circus chimpanzee and an escaped lion add to the interest of the narrative.

Send for Our Free Illustrated Catalogue

CUPPLES & LEON COMPANY, Publishers **New York**

SLIM TYLER AIR STORIES



By RICHARD H. STONE

12mo. Cloth. Illustrated. Jacket in colors. Price 50 cents per volume. Postage 10 cents additional

A new group of stories for boys by a new author whose excellent air adventures are so realistically written and so up to the minute in all their implications as to win ready admiration from all readers.

1. SKY RIDERS OF THE ATLANTIC
or Slim Tyler's First Trip in the Clouds

Slim Tyler though but a boy, finds himself confronted by troubles and by enemies that might well have dismayed a man. By pluck and straight thinking he fights clear of entanglements and gains a place he has long coveted among flyers.

2. LOST OVER GREENLAND
or Slim Tyler's Search for Dave Boyd

Slim Tyler sets out in search of his friend and patron who is lost over Greenland, and in so doing has many hair-raising adventures that make an absorbing story.

3. AN AIR CARGO OF GOLD
or Slim Tyler, Special Bank Messenger

Quick-witted and resourceful, Slim, after strenuous efforts to gain the world's endurance record, faces more odds when he makes a perilous trip carrying a cargo of gold.

4. ADRIFT OVER HUDSON BAY
or Slim Tyler in the Land of Ice

Blazing the great Northeastern trail against great odds, this story will captivate the hearts of the boys.

5. AN AIRPLANE MYSTERY
or Slim Tyler on the Trail

The story of the rescue, after the flyers had been given up for lost, was a "whale of a story."

Send for Our Free Illustrated Catalogue

CUPPLES & LEON COMPANY, Publishers New York